



dhentulli
a forgotten insignia

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BDES Moving Images, Communication Design.

Maharaja Ranjitsinh Institute of Design.

This craft documentation has been written,
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INSTITUTE OF DESIGN



The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda
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CRAFT DOCUMENTATION

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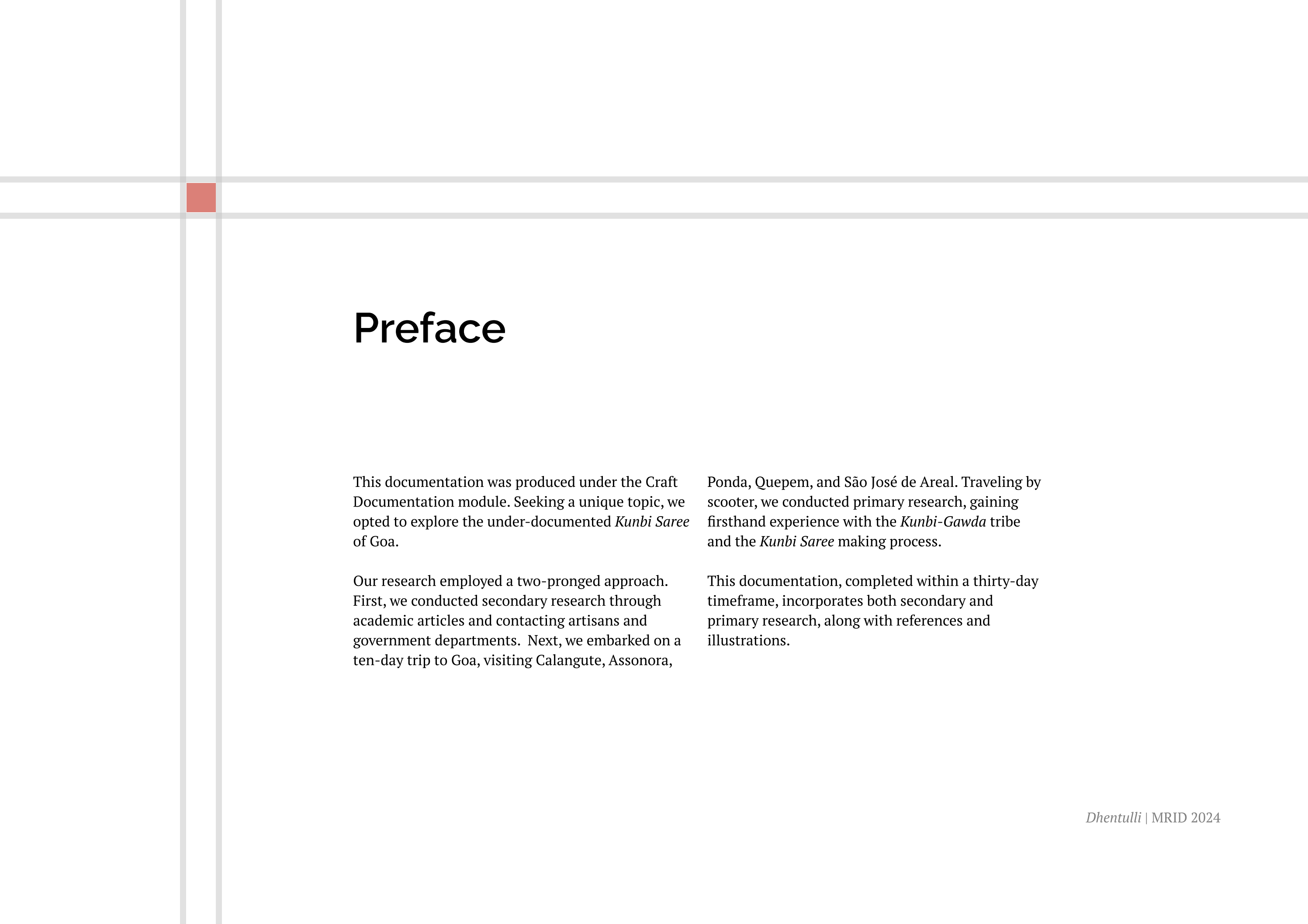
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Preface

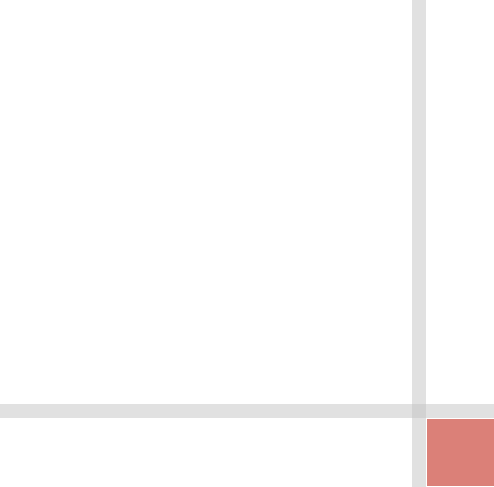
This documentation was produced under the Craft Documentation module. Seeking a unique topic, we opted to explore the under-documented *Kunbi Saree* of Goa.

Our research employed a two-pronged approach. First, we conducted secondary research through academic articles and contacting artisans and government departments. Next, we embarked on a ten-day trip to Goa, visiting Calangute, Assonora,

Ponda, Quepem, and São José de Areal. Traveling by scooter, we conducted primary research, gaining firsthand experience with the *Kunbi-Gawda* tribe and the *Kunbi Saree* making process.

This documentation, completed within a thirty-day timeframe, incorporates both secondary and primary research, along with references and illustrations.





About MRID

The Design Institute is named after the alumni of the Faculty and the erstwhile Maharaja of Baroda, Shrimant Ranjit Singh Gaekwad, hence the name, The Faculty of Fine Arts, one of the premier art schools of India, is dedicated to the education of professional artists and scholars of theory of art more than half a century. It has been recognized on a global level as the foremost institute in India in the field of Visual Arts. As part of the dissemination and expansion of the art and design curriculum,

Faculty of Fine Arts was established in 2013, a National level Design Institute under its auspices. Maharaja Ranjit Singh Gaekwad Institute of Design [MRID]. MRID offers design courses at the Graduate and post Graduate levels specializing in Craft and Design, Communication Design, Accessory Design, Ceramic & Glass and Moving Images. The Degrees offered are with the Bachelor of Design [B.Des] and Master of Design [M.Des].

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01.

Introduction to *Kunbi Saree*

Left Side:

*A range of different
objects are weaved in the
handlooms of Assanora
that are State
Government run.*



The *Kunbi Saree* is named after the *Kunbi-Gawda* Tribe of Goa, the aboriginal inhabitants of the land. Majorly an agricultural community, they spend most of their time in the paddy fields cultivating rice. Therefore, the width of the *saree* is shorter than a regular *saree*; it ends just below the knee, making it comfortable for the women to work in the fields, while also performing household chores with ease. The *Kunbi saree* has a unique way of draping so that it does not get in their way while working. It is wrapped around the knees and upper body and fastened with a knot on the right shoulder. There are no flowy ends left hanging around the body.

The *sarees* were made with cotton, the ideal material for Goan temperatures. The cotton threads would be dyed with natural, locally-sourced dyes and then woven into a *saree*. The *sarees* were usually red in colour; blue and purple were the colours used for the purpose of mourning and the rituals that follow. The *Kunbi-Gawda* tribe was not involved in the making of the *saree*. They would call artisans from nearby regions to weave the *saree*.

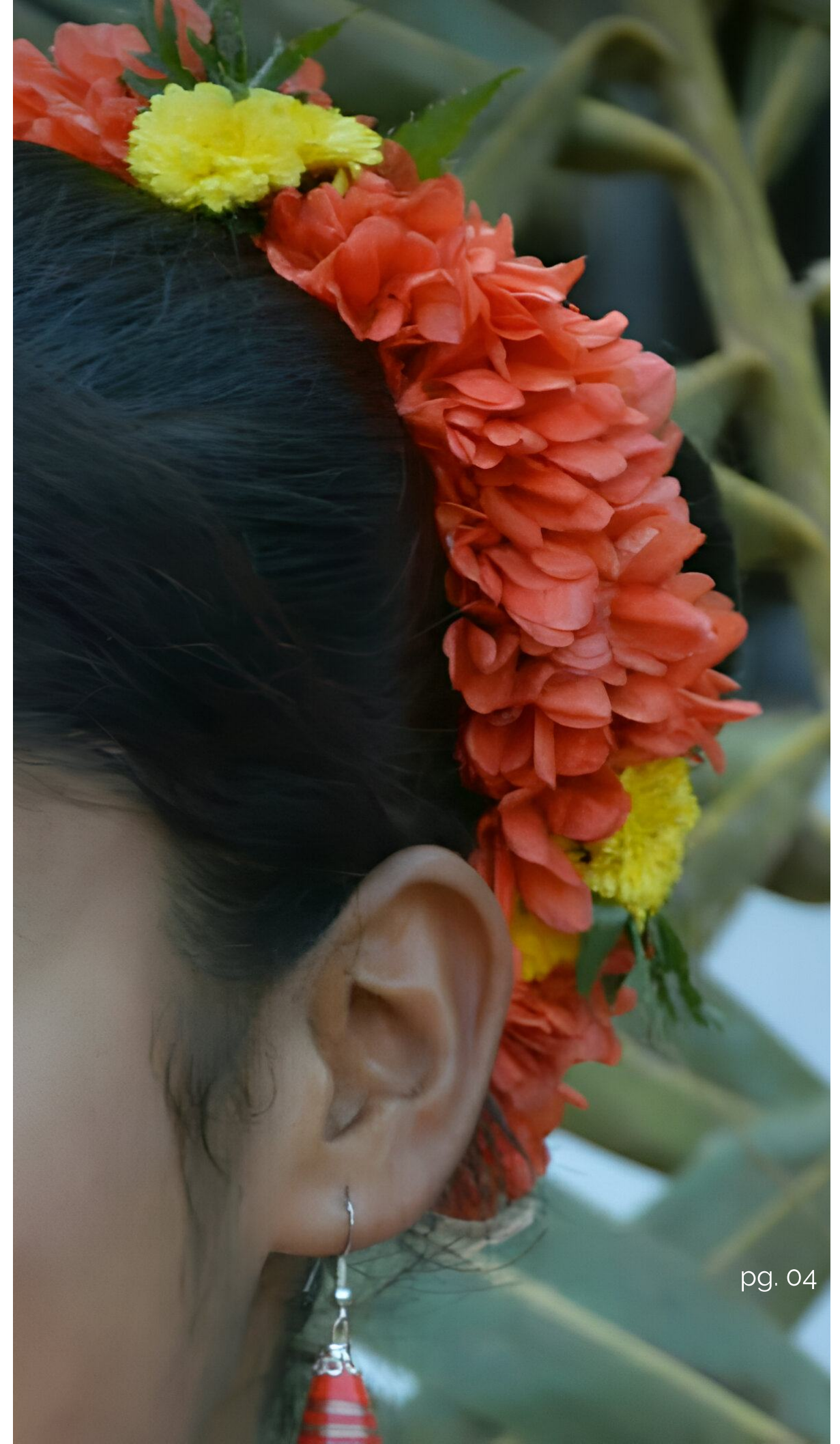
The *Kunbi saree* is simple yet beautiful. It has always been woven with a checkered white pattern, woven in plain weave. It was affordable and served the purpose, and that was the prime objective in the birth of this craft.

Left:

The ladies are wearing the traditional Kunbi Saree and are dancing the traditional Kunbi Dance

Right:

A girl has adorned her hair with flowers for performing the Kunbi dance





02.

Place of Origin

Left:

Arambol beach, situated in North Goa is known for its serene atmosphere, golden sands, and laid-back vibes. The beach is a popular spot for tourists and locals alike, offering a variety of activities to enjoy.

.01

Map of Goa

The smallest state by area (3,702 sq. kms), Goa lies on the southwestern coast, with a coastline of 105 kms, within the Konkan region, separated from the Deccan highlands by the Western Ghats. It is bound by the states of Maharashtra on the north, Karnataka on the east and south and by the Arabian Sea on the west. By population, it is the fourth-smallest state. [1]

Goa consists of two districts: North Goa and South Goa, with the former being more popular with tourists. South Goa is known for its remote beaches and its calm atmosphere. Its capital is Panaji and its largest city is Vasco da Gama.



Top:

The districts in the State of Goa. Dotted across the state are ancient temples and churches, testaments to Goa's rich cultural tapestry. Calangute attracting sunbathers and water sports enthusiasts. South Goa offers a more serene experience.

.02

Geography and Climate

“Goa [...] is essentially a rugged hilly and mountainous tract with narrow valleys and sandy linear plains”[2] “On its north runs the Terekhol river, which separates Goa from Maharashtra and on the south lies North Canara district of Karnataka. On the east lie the Western Ghats and in the west the Arabian Sea. Panaji, Margao, Vasco, Mapusa and Ponda are the main towns of Goa. Mandovi and Zuari are main rivers. There are other rivers like Betul, Chapora.” [3] Goa, being in the tropical zone and near the Arabian Sea, has a hot and humid climate for most of the year, with May being the hottest (35 degrees celsius). Monsoon rains arrive by early June, lasting till late September. Winter is short, lasting from mid-December to February. [4]

Top & Bottom:

The diverse geographical landscapes, beaches and green mountains are a staple in Goa.



.03

Agriculture

The *Kunbi*, *Gawda*, *Velip* tribes were the first settlers and inhabited the forest areas. They were attached to the land, forest, livestock, and wildlife. When they first arrived in Goa, they were skilled in the technicalities of domesticating animals, growing cereals and plants and fabricating tools to create agricultural implements to dig the land.

Following their arrival, the forefathers of the communities prepared the land to be ready for agriculture and residency with their vast knowledge of farming and common sense. They surveyed the land thoroughly before doing so. Before this project, they had to undertake mass deforestation activities and bring vast plains of fertile land under cultivation, mainly the paddy fields.

Their target after this was to reclaim the land at the bank of the river. In order to prepare the *Khazan* land, they constructed the internal and external bund to prevent the saline water from the sea for protecting the crop of the paddy field.[5]

Top:

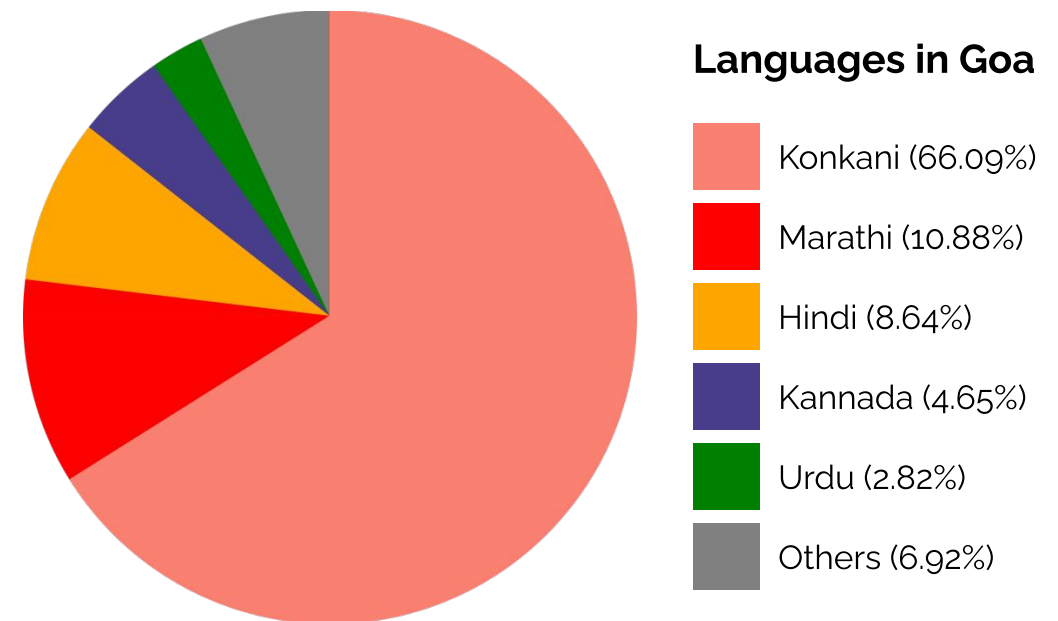
One of the major form of agriculture in is the slash and burn farming.



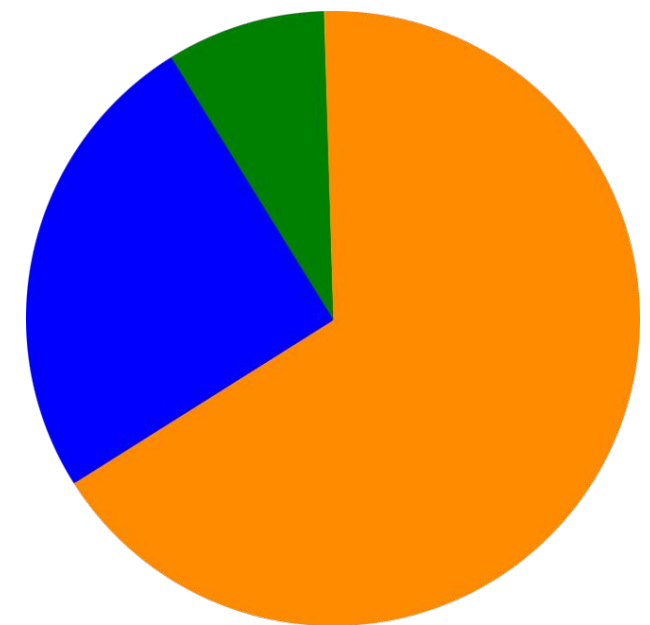
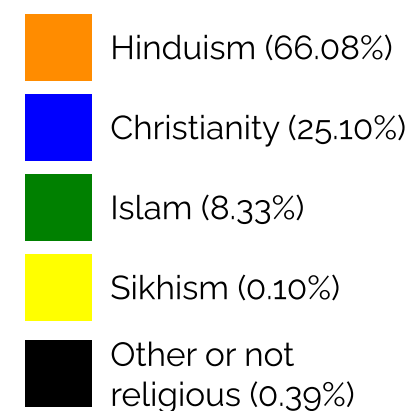
North Goa Demographics

North Goa's administrative landscape is divided into 4 Revenue Divisions, further split into 5 Revenue Talukas. These Talukas encompass 62 *Mandal Praja Parishads* (administrative units) and 120 *Gram Panchayats* (village councils) catering to the rural areas. Urban pockets are served by 5 Municipalities and 1 Municipal Corporation. The region is further demarcated into 14 census zones. While the total number of villages is also 120, this information might be categorized under *Gram Panchayats*. [6]

The density of population per sq km in Goa is 364 in 2001 as compared to 316 in 1991. North Goa has a much higher density (437) as compared to South Goa (300). The national figure is 324. The literacy rate is 80 per cent. [7]



Religion in Goa



.05

North Goa History

North Goa is one of the two districts that constitute the State of Goa. The district has an area of 1736 km², and is bounded by Sindhudurg and Kolhapur districts of Maharashtra state to the north and east respectively, by South Goa District to the south, and by the Arabian sea to the west.

Historically, much of today's North Goa Talukas (Pernem, Bicholim, and Sattari) were under the Kingdom of Sawantwadi while Ponda was under the Sunda Kingdom, the Marathas and Kingdom of Sawantwadi at various points in time. Hence these territories were seen as safe haven for the Hindus who were living under continuous fear of the Portuguese inquest. These territories were conquered by Portuguese as part of New Conquest

in the late 18th century. These territories then remained with the Portuguese till 1961 when it was liberated by India. In a carefully planned action by the Armed forces, the Government of India entered Goa in December 1961 and with hardly any bloodshed, Goa was liberated from the Portuguese to remove the last vestiges of foreign domination in India.[8]

Goa and two other former Portuguese enclaves became the Union territory of Goa, Daman and Diu,

and Goa was organized into a single district in 1965. On 30th May 1987, Goa attained statehood (while Daman and Diu remained a union territory), and Goa was reorganized into two districts, North Goa and South Goa. [8]

Top Image:

The Fort Aguada, overlooking Sinquerim beach, is an ASI-protected Monument of National Importance in Goa.



Portuguese Goa Timeline

1560 - 1774
The Inquisition is imposed in Portuguese Goa.

1510
Afonso de Albuquerque conquers Goa in India for Portugal.

1530
Portuguese Goa replaces Cochin as the capital of the Estado da India.

1538
Portuguese Goa has its **first bishop** appointed.

1560
Portuguese Goa has its first archbishop appointed.

1603
Dutch forces attack Portuguese Goa.

1610
Dutch forces attack Portuguese Goa.

1638 - 44
Dutch forces attempt to blockade Portuguese Goa.

1656 - 63
Dutch forces attempt to blockade Portuguese Goa for a second time. It ends with a peace treaty.

1799 - 1815
Portuguese Goa is occupied by the British during the Napoleonic Wars.

1947
India gained **independence from the Britishers**

1961
Portuguese Goa is invaded by the Indian military.

1962
Goa was formally incorporated into the Indian Union

1987
Goa officially becomes a state within the Republic of India.



03.

About *Kunbi-Gawda*

Left:

The photograph taken by Pantaleão Fernandes for his book Goa: Rare Portraits that provides a rare glimpse into the rural and tribal culture of Goa through its native communities residing in its forests.

.01

History & Lifestyle

Etymology of the Kunbi-Gawda Word

According to the Anthropological Survey of India, the term *Kunbi* is derived from *kun* and *bi* meaning 'people' and 'seeds' respectively. Fused together, the two terms mean "those who germinate more seeds from one seed". Another etymology states that *Kunbi* is believed to have come from the Marathi word '*kunbawa*', or Sanskrit *kur*, meaning 'agricultural tillage'. Yet another etymology states that *Kunbi* derives from *kutumba* (family), or from the Dravidian *kul*, 'husbandman' or 'labourer.' Thus anyone who took up the occupation of a cultivator could be brought

under the generic term *Kunbi*. [9]

"the word *Gawda-Kunbi* is constructed not linguistically but rather based on the occupation of these people, that is, their occupation being cultivators or agriculturists." states Kelwin Mateus Monteiro (2015), in their research paper on the 'The *Gawda/Kunbi* Socio-Cultural Identity: A Study in Continuity and Discontinuity'.

Bottom:

Following a rhythm (Hindu kunbi dance form)

Etymology of the Kunbi-Gawda Tribe

According to V. R. Mitragotri, "*Kunbi* is considered to be a sub-caste of the Marathas, and they are primarily engaged in farming. (Mitragotri 1999: 59). Besides Goa, the communities of *Kunbi*'s are largely found in the state of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, and Kerala. The *Kunbi-Gawda*'s of Goa were included in the Scheduled Tribes list, since 2003.



Lifestyle of Kunbi-Gawda

The *Kunbi-Gawda* people are of short, sturdy builds, with a dark complexion. They toil endlessly in the fields, while keeping their spirits high.

There is a community that is tightly knit. “All their decisions pertaining to the tribal identity and their wellbeing are made and executed in the communitarian spirit. (Monteiro, 2015 p. 23). They are a community that is very faithful to their roots and heritage, believing in an egalitarian society.

Kunbi-Gawda huts can be identified with their “mud walls, a cow dung floor and thatched roofs made of coconut palm leaves or straw and bamboos (today they use small clay tiles known as *sulche nodde*).” (Monteiro, 2015 p. 26) These houses will have a courtyard, a mud bench and a pit in the floor for rice pounding.

The younger generation *Kunbi-Gawda* people have come out of poverty by getting education for jobs outside their villages, in the cities.



Right:
It's another photograph taken by Pantaleão Fernandes for his book Goa: Rare Portraits

History of Religion

There are varying perspectives within the *Kunbi-Gawda* community regarding the link between religion and caste identity. Mrs. Shilpa, a practitioner of Hinduism, suggests a distinction: *Kunbis* following Hinduism retain the "Kunbi" label, while those following Christianity are called "Gawda." However, Adv. Joan Fernandez, a proud *Gawda* and advocate for the community, argues that *Kunbi* and *Gawda* represent a separate community, and religion doesn't determine caste affiliation.

This ambiguity highlights the complexities surrounding the *Kunbi-Gawda* community's religious history. While most members identify as Hindu or Christian, reflecting Goa's dominant religions, the Portuguese colonial influence played

a significant role. Their introduction of Catholicism and pressure to convert likely shaped the current religious landscape.

Continuity-in-Discontinuity in Religion

The *Kunbi-Gawda* tribe was once a community which worshipped nature, attributing a soul to nature. Later, the Aryans converted them to Hinduism, after which the Portuguese converted them to Christianity. In 1928, the *Shuddhikaran* movement would see some of them converted back to Hinduism. They remained a target of religious crusades throughout Indian history, and despite movements like the one in 1928, their original beliefs are not witnessed today because of the mystified nature of the *Kunbi-Gawda* history. [9]



“The origins of any folklore are rooted in the *Sitz im Leben*, the daily life settings. Hence, many of the sung expressions (folk songs) of the *Kunbi-Gawda* depict their hardships and the simple and innocent life that they lead” (Monteiro, 2015 p. 28). These are sung in the *Gawdi* dialect of Konkani.

Their folklore is dense, filled with folk-music, songs, dances and theatre, performed at festivals, or during special events. The community takes great pride in their folklore, regularly enacting these songs and dances, at any opportunity. [9]



Side and Top images:

Basilica of Bom Jesus and Mangueshi Temple, Goa, respectively.

.03

Culture of *Kunbi-Gawda*

In the *Kunbi-Gawda* community, celebration of all occasions surrounding life cycle rituals around birth and marriage, feasts and festivals are incomplete without dancing and singing. The songs are closely linked to the dances in this community.

“The study and understanding of dance, which is a very conspicuous part of the culture, helps in developing a deeper understanding of the structure of society and brings to focus the new insights to understand other parts of the culture as well (Kaeppler 1978:32).” (Fernandes, 2020, p. 81)

“Some of the different *Gawda* dances include the *dhalo*, *fugdi*, and *ghumta nach*, and these dances are now performed both in the village as well as outside, and as mentioned earlier, they may be done commercially for remuneration as well as non-commercially as part of the community celebrations.” (Fernandes, 2020, p. 84) “Dances are performed on various occasions like for marriage, competitions, and for other festivals. The performances were performed

separately by females and males. There was compartmentalization of the performance. Traditionally the women would dance *fugddi*, *dhalo*, and (marriage songs), whereas men used to perform their cultural activities for pre-lent on the maand (sacred place).” (Fernandes, 2020, p. 84)

“In the *Kunbi-Gawda* community, when women dance, they wear red *dhentulli*, adorn their hair with flowers, and wear jewellery. Although widows do not wear all the above things in their daily life, dance has provided them an outlet to wear all these things for their dance performance. So in their lives as widows, they have a lot of restrictions, but through this dance form, there has been the empowerment of women, especially the widows, to come out of their homes and perform the dance without any restrictions. Gangoli (2011:59), while talking about issues of sexuality and representation, says that ‘To be

Bottom:

A performance of Kunbi Dance.



acceptable, women are allowed to look ‘westernised’, but demonstrate that they have not lost ‘Hindu’ values of chastity and modernity” (Fernandes, 2020, p. 95-96)

Tribal Festival at Quepem

Since 2011, the Christian *Adivasi Sangatna* of Quepem, which was registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 (Central Act 21 of 1860) on 25 March 2008, and on 22 August 2016, has had a name change, to *Adivasi Sangatna Kepem*. This *sangatna* has been organising a tribal festival every year to celebrate tribal culture, and this festival sees significant participation of women, particularly from Quepem.

On the day of the festival, women dress in the *dhentulli*, the traditional attire, and participate in the festival. There are stalls that are set up by women selling their traditional food items like *sanna*, *pinagr*, *donne*, *pattolloe*, etc. Women participate in the dance competition and other competitions like *moll* making (interlaced palm leaves), *san* making (broom-making). At this festival people try to revive their culture, may it be in the form of dance, songs, traditional dress, playing traditional games which have almost vanished from their day to day life today. There are *fugdi* and *dhalo* dance competitions, and many dance groups of women participate in this festival.



Side:
Tribal Festival at Quepem in 2020.

Bottom:
A group of dancers showcasing the result of their practice of the Kunbi Dance.



Gawda Songs

“The songs of the Gawda community are closely connected with dance. These songs are the depiction of the day-to-day lives of the people. The experiences of joy, sadness, and struggle of survival are narrated in the form of the songs. In the community, there were life cycle rituals that were performed by the members at birth, and at the time of marriage. For these rituals, different songs were sung by the members of the community. Various writers have written about the songs in Goa (Cardozo 1984; Pandit 2018; Pereira et al. 2005, 2011; Rodrigues 2015).” (Fernandes 2020, p. 104)

“Songs were sung at the time when a child was born in the family. The ceremony of *sutti*. It was performed on the seventh day after the birth of the child. All the community members are invited to this ceremony, but only the women dance the *fugdi*. Two women hold the hands of each other, both crossed, and they go round and round by singing songs. Many women dance in pairs of two. First, they move around in a circular motion at a slower pace, and after they complete certain rounds at the end, they move at the fast speed. The men also participated in the singing of *fugdi*. Today only few members of the community, invite people for *sutti* at their house. Otherwise, they just distribute the sweet to their relatives and neighbours, but *fugdi* are not performed. These songs, when composed by the members of the community, they always took into consideration the surroundings or the environment in which they were living.” (Fernandes 2020, p. 104)

“Most of the *fugdi* songs sung were all about their social life, and all of them were linked to nature, for example, to fields, the animals which they domesticated, the flowers, vegetables which they grew. Their life was revolved around nature, which could be seen in these songs. All the songs are a depiction of women’s life, who play a significant role in terms of the traditions and also in terms of understanding the *Gawda* culture.” (Fernandes, 2020)



.04

Maria Fernandes

Age:

63 years

Height :

5'2"

Place:

San Jose de Areal

Language :

Goan Konkani (only)

Occupation :

Agriculture

In conversation with her :

- She belongs to the *Kunbi-Gawda* tribe and follows the Christian religion.
- Has 4-5 *Kunbi Sarees* that she has preserved since years.
- She wore the *sarees* until the last decade, wears more comfortable cotton clothing now.
- She lends the *sarees* for the cultural programs in the village.
- She also danced in the programs but her declining physical health does not allow her to do it with the same vigor anymore.
- She used to work in the fields when she was young, but since she became ill, she has been unable to do any heavy work like agriculture.
- She has a husband and a son who is married.



.05

Isabella Costa

Age:

78 years

Height :

5'3"

Place:

San Jose de Areal

Language :

Goan Konkani (only)

Occupation :

Agriculture

In conversation with her :

- She belongs to the *Kunbi-Gawda* tribe and follows the Christian religion.
- She did not own a *Kunbi Saree* of her own.
- She still does farming and dance, despite the protests from her family members.
- She had last seen her parents and the villagers in her hometown villagers wearing the *Kunbi Saree*, or *Dhentulli*, as an everyday attire. Apart from that, the younger generation does not wear the *Dhentulli*.
- She used to work in the fields when young, still does. Has her own small garden where she grows various vegetables.
- She is married and has a son . It was her son who studied and brought the family out of poverty. They have a solid cement house that is double storied. Some construction was also ongoing.





04.

About *Kunbi Saree*

Left:

Identity of Goa and it's culture. The Kunbi Saree, is the perfect example of functionality and simplicity, just like the tribe associated with it, i.e. the Kunbi- Gawda.

.01

Understanding the *Kunbi Saree*

Dhentulli, or *Saree*, in their native language, is another name for the *Kunbi Saree* that is worn by the women in Goa. Farming being the main occupation of the *Kunbi-Gawda* women, this *Saree* was made shorter in width so that it ends just below the knee when wrapped around the torso. The draping style was also not like the typical *sarees'* drape; it was wrapped around the torso and fastened with a knot on the right shoulder, commonly called the *Dhentulli*. Initially, it was not worn with a blouse but with the invasion of Portuguese in Goa, they deemed it uncivilized and made it compulsory to wear a blouse when wearing the *Saree*.

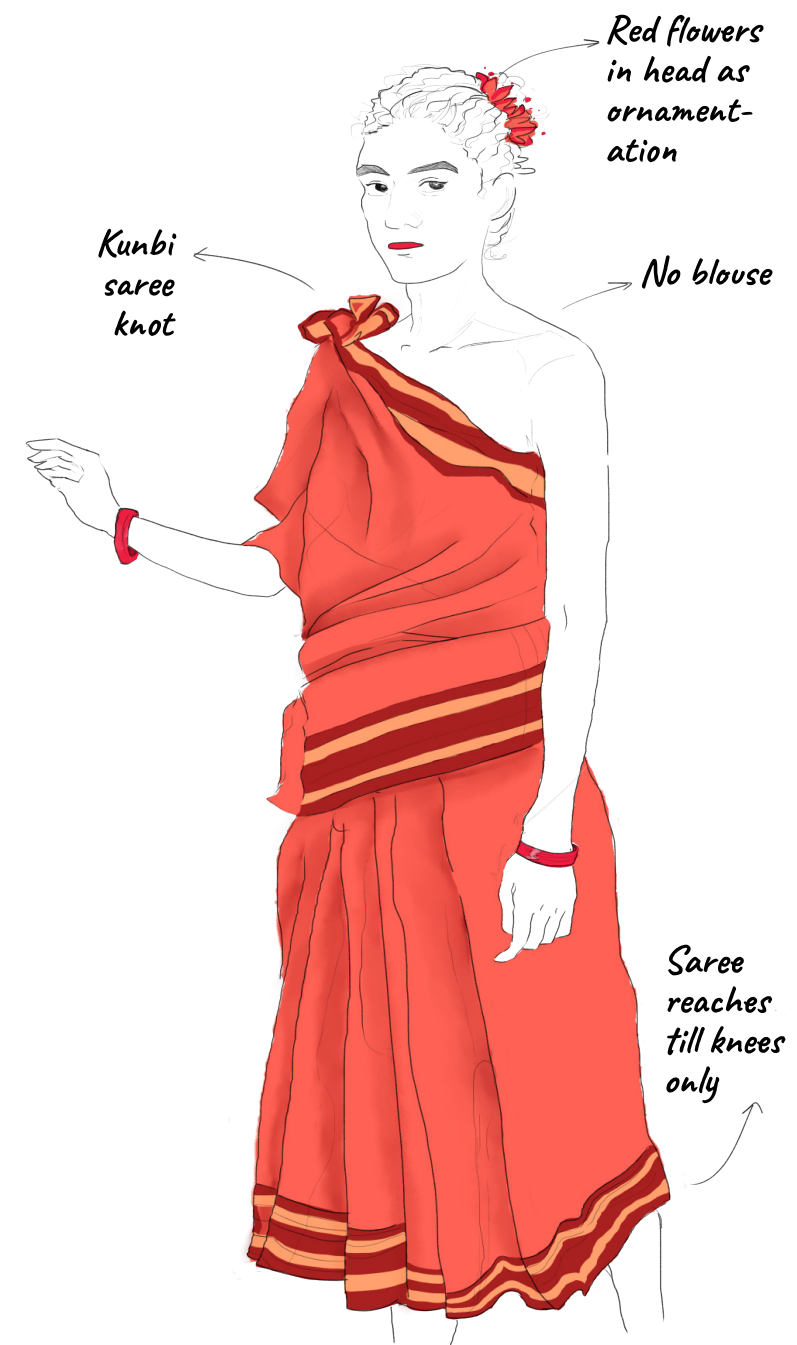
The traditional *Kunbi Saree* was made with 100%

cotton, which was procured locally. It was 4-5 yards in length and the dye used was also natural. It is believed to be obtained from the jafflinchi fruit found in the wild forests of Goa but there is no solid source to confirm it. *Kunbi Saree* was majorly red with checked lines. Blue and black *Kunbi Saree* were also made, which were used for the purpose of mourning.

When it comes to the design of the *Saree*, it's simple. This simplicity adds to the elegance and timelessness of the *saree*. And as the *Saree* would be for regular use, the design was both economical and appropriate. These features therefore, make the *saree* stand out more.

During Portuguese rule in Goa, the production of the *Saree* was outlawed. They also made new rules stating that the *Saree* had to be worn with a blouse, when previously, women did not wear blouses underneath the *Saree*. It was then that the women wore a choli, or a puff-sleeved white blouse.

The *Dhentulli* was and is a visual tag of their community. The tribe has always been stereotyped to be backward, barbaric and impure. Anyone who wears the *Saree* is easily recognised as *Kunbi-Gawda*, becoming the victims of these prejudgements. Although many women back then wore the *Saree*, very few have preserved it. The *Saree* is either hidden away or gotten rid of completely, or are given to the *Kunbi* dancers for their performances.



Characteristics of *Kunbi Saree*

Revival efforts, though not enough, are undertaken by various bodies, be it government or independent to keep the craft alive. It is seen, not only as the identity of the *Kunbi-Gawda* tribe, it is also the cultural identity of Goa. But this does not relive it from being recognized as shameful by the members of the community itself. When the *saree* is worn for dance programs or plays highlighting the cultural identities of Goa, it is applauded; but when it's worn by the *Kunbi-Gawda* woman as a daily attire, it is seen as backwards and uncivilized. [10]

Today, one will not see the bright red of the *dhentulli* in the paddy fields of Goa like it once shone. Only a few older women have preserved the *saree* now, and the ones who wear it have the newer, synthetically made *sarees*. Some *Gawda* women wear the *saree* in the *Kunbi* style. The *sarees* made now are not 100% cotton and even the dyes used are not natural. The scarcity of cotton and the cost of pure cotton play an essential role in this change.

Older *sarees* cannot be worn now because the colour has faded away and the material is worn out. They are only brought out during special occasions like cultural programs when the *Kunbi* dance is performed. Another reason is that not everyone has a *dhentulli* now, so the women who do have it end up not wearing it. There is also the stigma surrounding the *Kunbi-Gawda* tribe about them being backward and barbaric, making the people not wear the *saree* because it becomes like an symbol of the primitive.

Everybody can agree though, that the feel of the original *dhentulli* was much more comfortable for the body than the new synthetic *sarees* which are not fully cotton. Since there are other pieces of garments that are more comfortable to wear now, one would not choose the synthetic *dhentulli* as the best option for the Goan temperatures. Today, a mixture of nylon and cotton is used which makes it costlier for the production of the *saree*. The *saree* is not cheap as it used to be back in the day.

The history of the weaving of the *saree* is not documented properly and almost all the information is lost now. As the *Kunbi-Gawda* people themselves did not weave the *saree*, they have little to no knowledge about the process that takes place pre-weaving and the weaving itself. The Portuguese had stopped the production of the *saree* during their centuries-long rule over Goa. Even in such circumstances, some people persevered and tried to keep this tradition alive, but their efforts were in vain.



Top:

The blue *Kunbi* is worn to mourn for passing of one's distant relative.

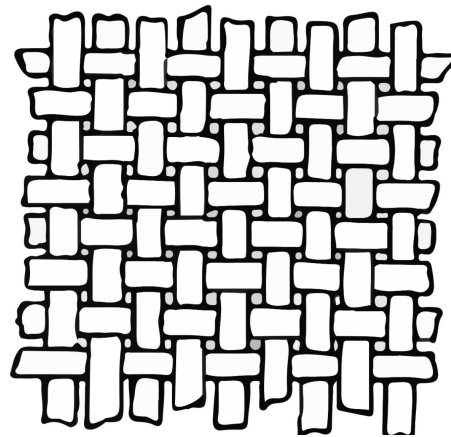
Weaving Types

- a. Plain weave
- b. Twill weave
- c. Satin weave

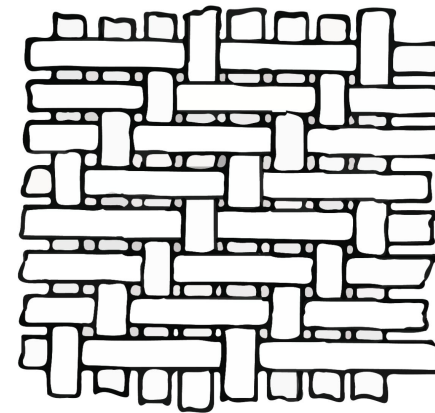
The handloom can be used for making the complicated designs with the help of dobby and jacquard. Examples: damask, weft back cloth, patent satin etc.

All products which can be produced on power looms can also be produced on handlooms. But there are many products which can be produced by handloom only. Example: *Banarsi saree* [14]

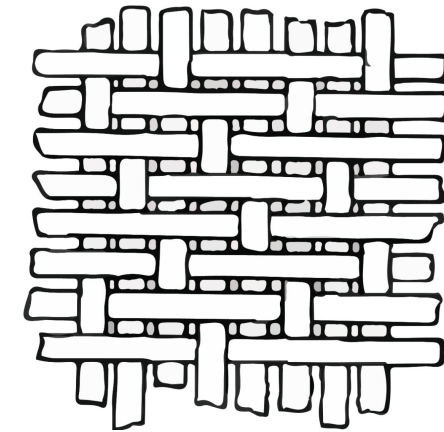
Types of Weave



a) Plain Weave



b) Twill Weave



c) Satin Weave

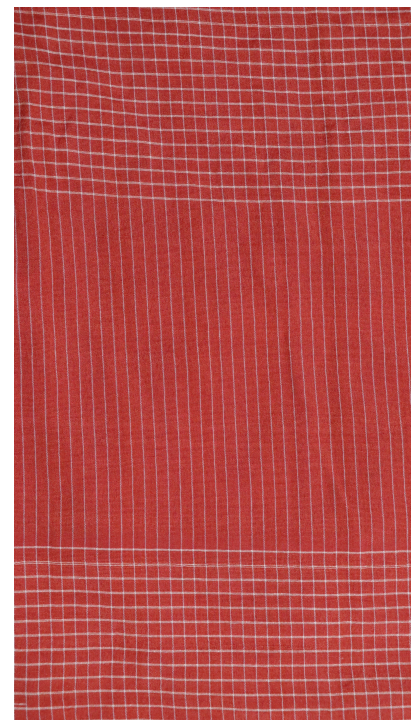
The *Kunbi Saree* is made using the **Plain weave**.

Middle:

There is an area in this saree where the design is not checkered, reasons unknown.

Side:

*Both the plain weave and the white border of the *Kunbi Saree* is visible in the image.*

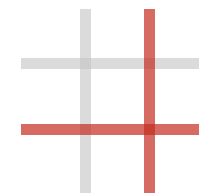


.02

How to wear a *Kunbi Saree*?

A very important thing that needs to be kept in mind is that the steps are shown for how to wear a *Kunbi Saree*, in ***Kunbi style***.

The width of a usual *Saree* is longer than the *Kunbi Saree*, therefore the *Saree* will not end at the knee.





01 One hand-length *Saree* is measured..



02



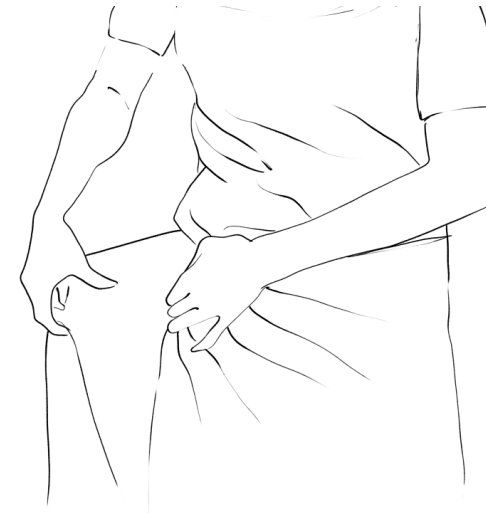
03 ... and then the *Saree* is folded.



07 The ends of the *Saree* are used to make a knot...



08 Then the knot is secured.



09 Putting the knot inside the *Saree*, the cloth is taken from the back...



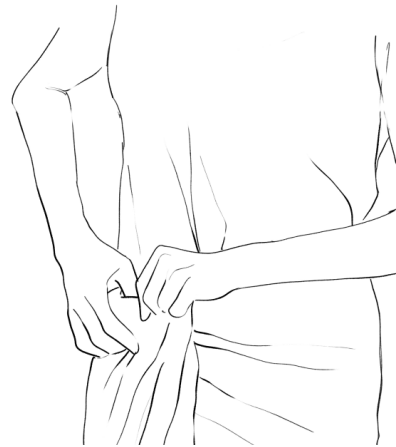
04



05 Next, the folded *Saree* is wrapped around the waist.



06



10 ... and pushed down the wrapped around cloth.



11



12 The other end of the *Saree* is taken...



13 ... around the body ...



14



15 ... and the end part of the *Saree* is taken ...



19 ... to make pleats.



20



21



16 ... to make a knot on the shoulder.



17 Once the knot is fastened, the left over cloth of the *Saree* is taken...



18



22 Once the pleats are made, they are tucked inside.



23



24 And Voila! You have worn a *Saree* in the *Kunbi* style.



05.

The Weaving Process

Left:

Identity of Goa and it's culture. The Kunbi Saree, is the perfect example of functionality and simplicity, just like the tribe associated with it, i.e. the Kunbi- Gawda.

.01

Raw Materials

As mentioned earlier, the Department of Handicrafts, Textiles and Coir, Goa has opened training centers to promote the craft of *Dhentulli*. But doing so is not as easy as it would have once been. The production of cotton is not the same in Goa, hence the raw materials have to be transported from outside the state which, naturally, turns out to be costly for the department.

After speaking with the department authority, Ravini Daure, we were told that the material comes from the National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC), Bengaluru. This corporation, an undertaking by the Ministry of Textiles is coordinating all actions covering the procurement and supply of inputs at reasonable prices,

augmenting the marketing efforts of state handloom agencies and initiating developmental activities for upgrading the technology in the handloom sector and improving productivity.

Mr. Vijay Upari walked us through the process of procuring this cotton. The 100% pure cotton comes from the state of Tamil Nadu, from the regions surrounding the city of Erode.

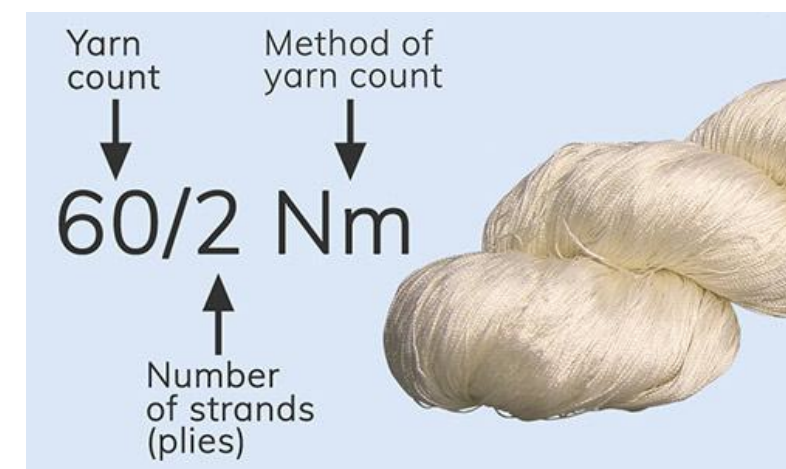
He confirmed that the dyes are synthetic dyes, but did not have further information on this matter.

The hank yarns are then transported to the Department in Goa through VRL Logistics, which then distributes it to the various training centers. The thread count of the yarns is 2/60 for the *saree* and 2/60 for the other clothing items. Thread count in a yarn is the thickness of the thread used in the yarn, and the method in which it is tied together.

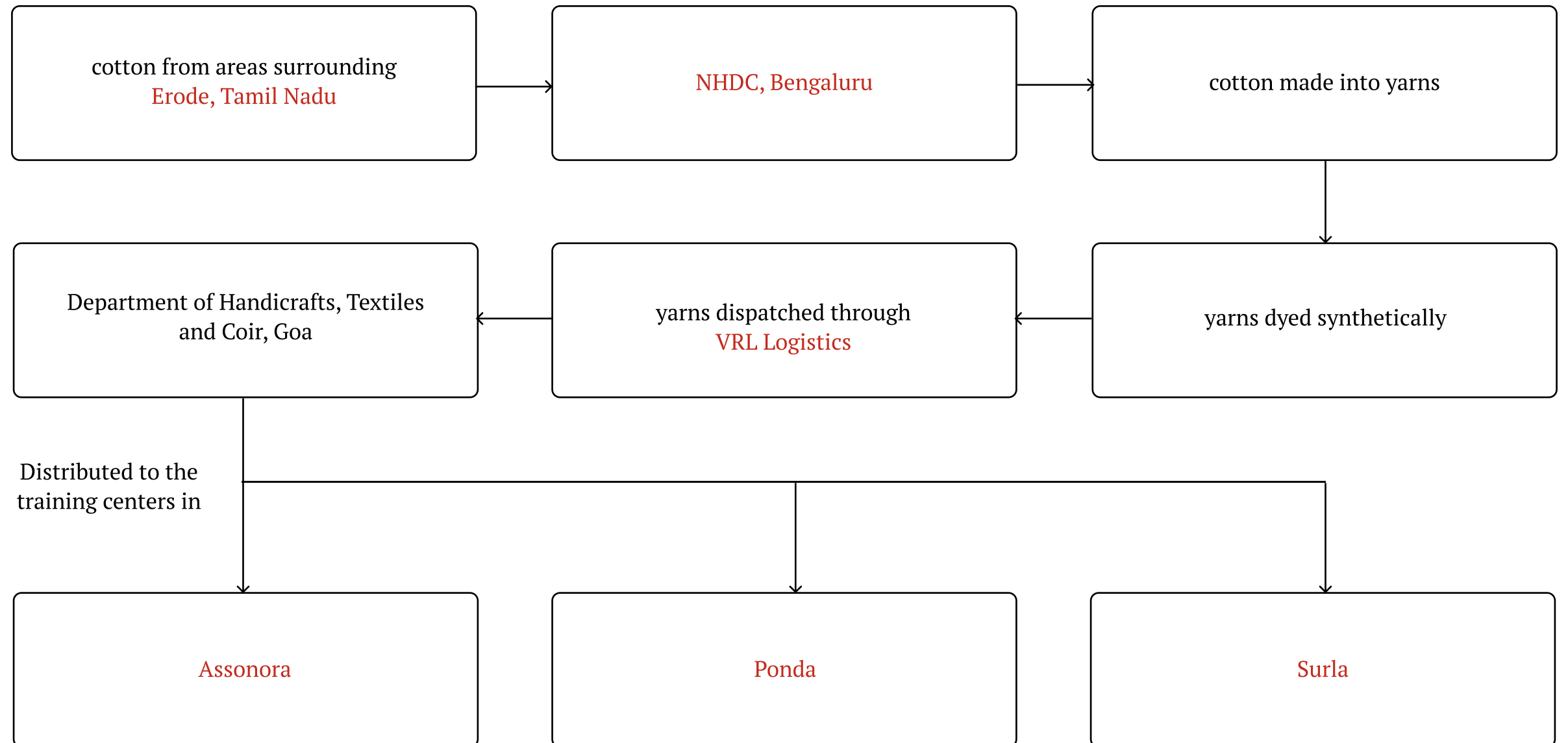
The higher the thread count, the finer the fabric; the lower the thread count, the thicker the fabric. The numbers range from 20 being the thickest up to 200 being the finest.

Top:
Hank yarns in the Ponda Training Center.

Bottom:
Explanation of thread count in a yarn.



How the cotton reaches the weavers



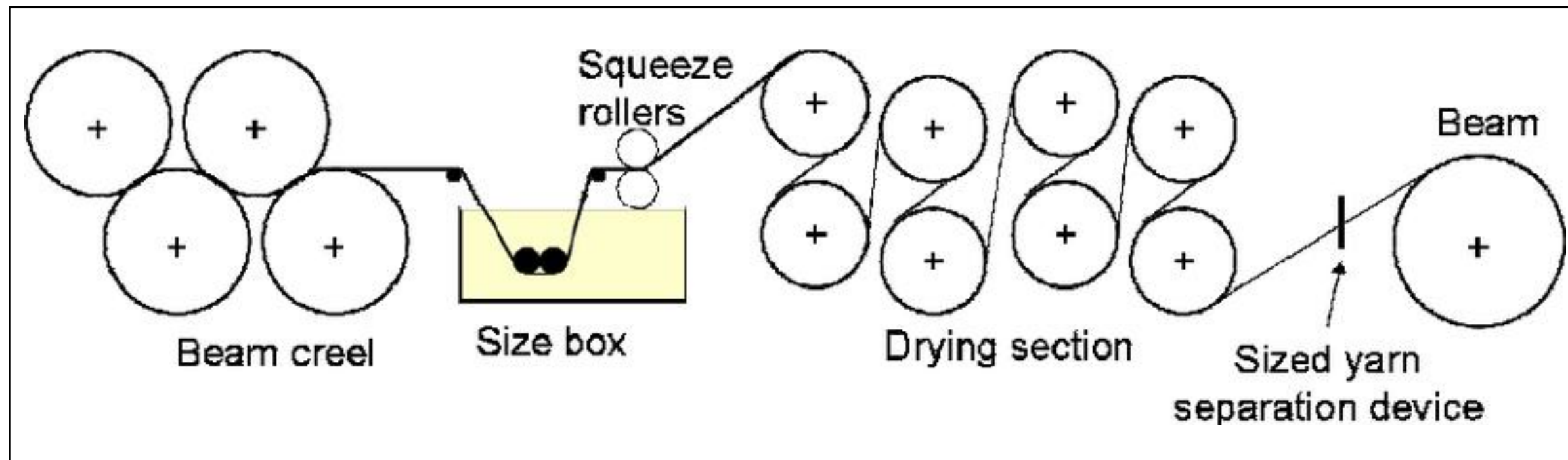
Sizing is the process of applying a sizing agent on a warp yarn, so as to increase the strength of the warp yarn to resist it from the mechanical stress applied to it during weaving. This material can be synthetic - polyvinyl alcohol or acrylic based, or natural - rice starch.

We observed that no sizing process is done in the centers we went to. The threads were very fine and were breaking easily. Which is why, the rookies are trained on thicker threads first and then come to weave the finely threaded *saree*.



Side:
Street sizing is a manual method of sizing.

Bottom:
Conventional sizing process.



.02

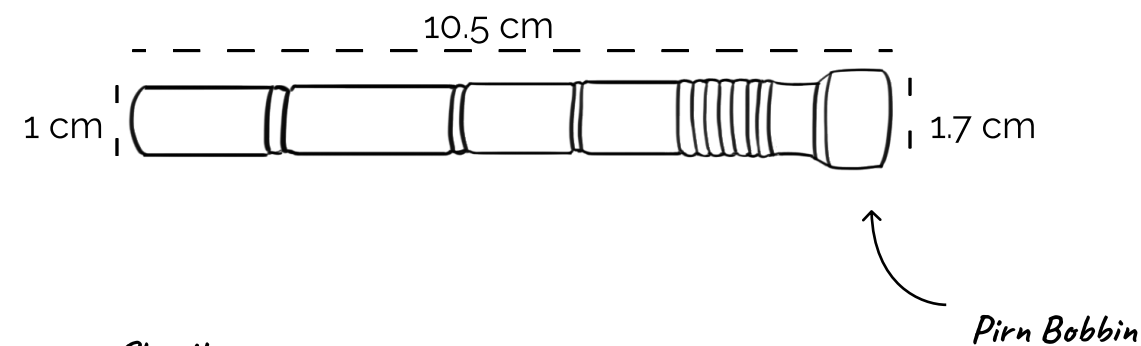
Tools & Instruments

Both the centers in Assonora and Ponda had enthusiastic weavers who were eager to tell us what each tool does and even let us sit to live-sketch and measure each and every tool.

The Handloom is the main operating machine for the weaving. But there are many tools—big and small—that assist with the steps of weaving. We realised how important some of these tools are, that without them, one would not be able to go through with the weaving process. There are some places in India where all of the same tools are not used and some steps have to be done manually.

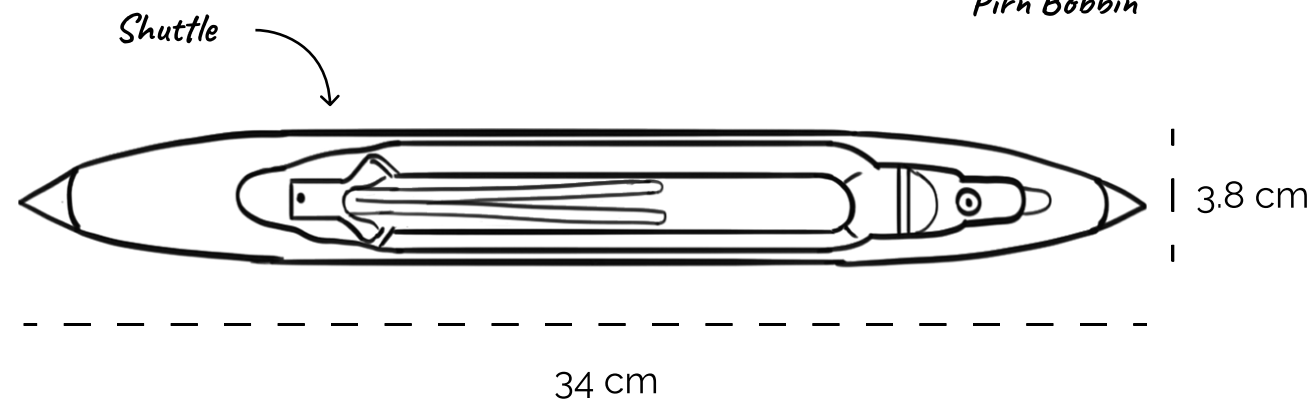
Right:
*Measuring tape used to measure the dimensions of
the shuttle in the Assonora workshop.*





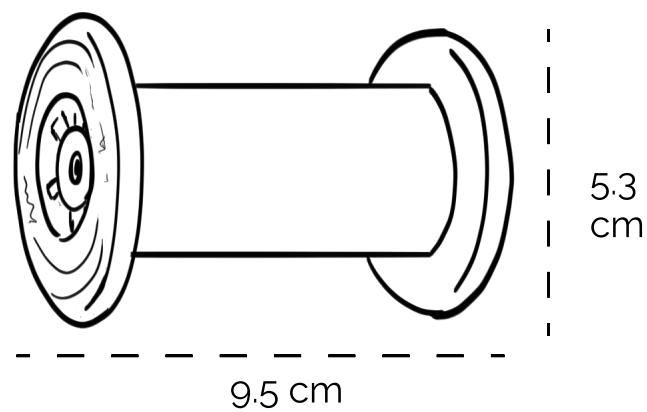
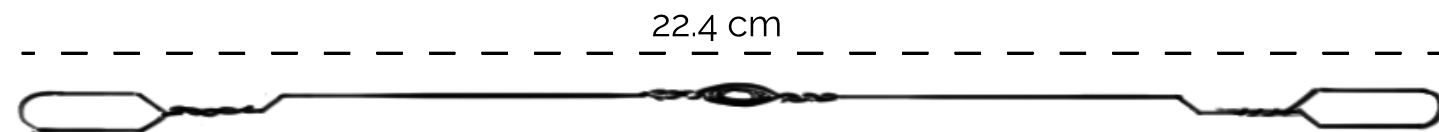
Pirn Bobbin and Shuttle

The weft yarn wound on a bobbin (pirn), which sets into a shuttle. As the shuttle passes back and forth through the warp shed, it releases weft yarn from the pin.[12]



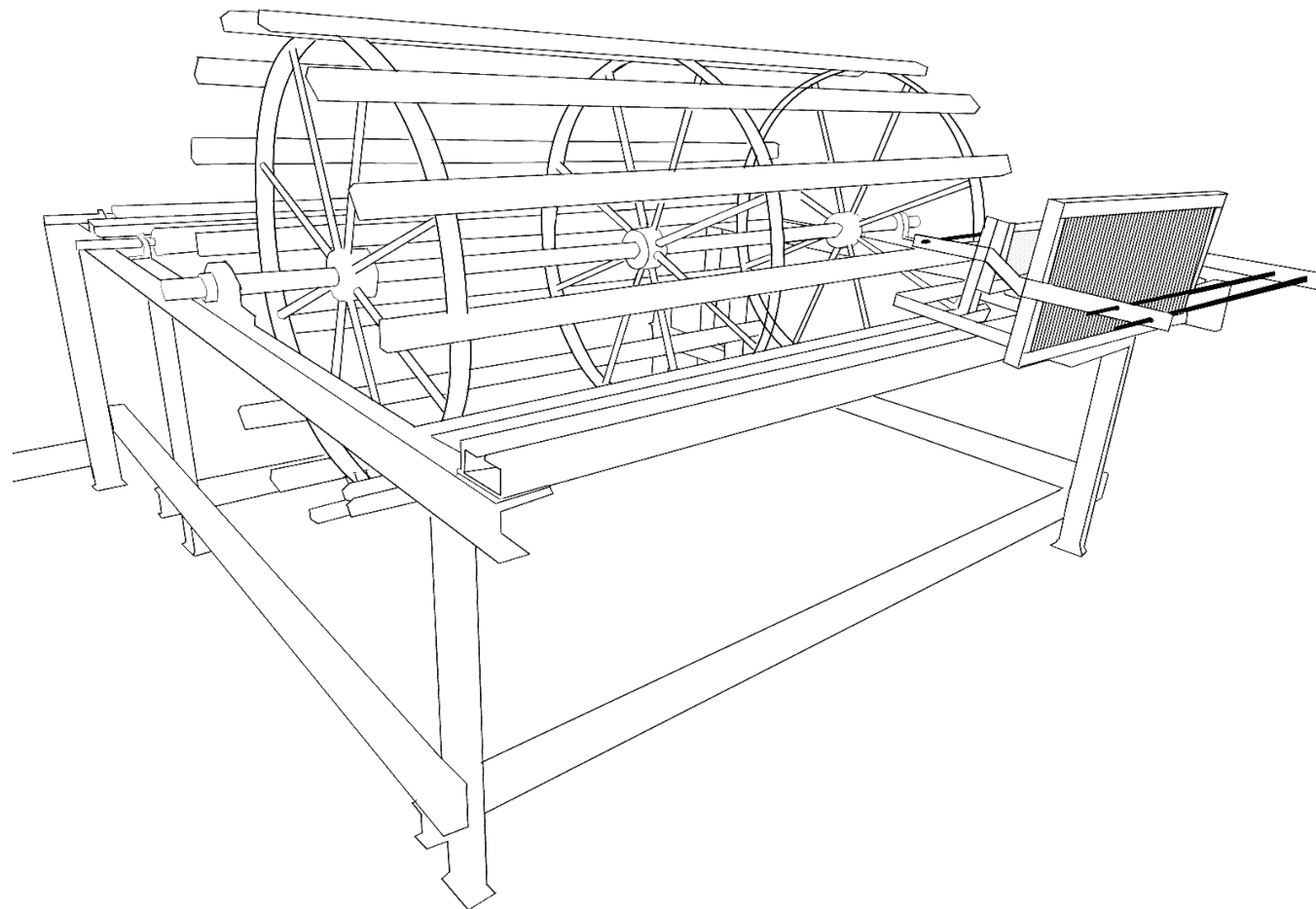
Heald wire

Heald wires are used to lead the warp yarns to move in lifting motion, forming a weaving shed for weft yarns to be brought in. [11]



Bobbin Pin

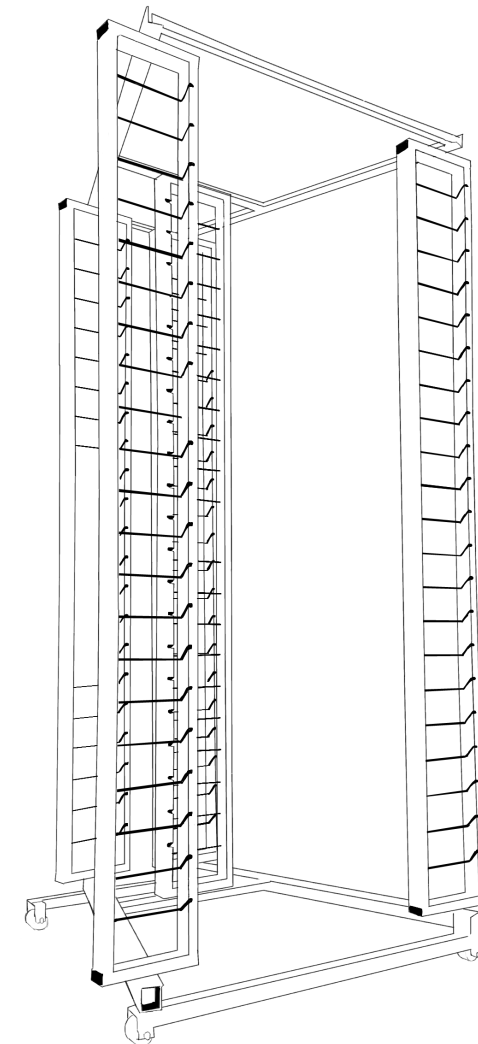
The weft yarn wound on a bobbin (pirn), which sets into a shuttle. As the shuttle passes back and forth through the warp shed, it releases weft yarn from the pin.[12]



Warping Drum

Warping is a method used to get the weaver's beam ready for installation on the weaving machine or loom. The threads from the bobbins on the creel frame are wound onto a large drum in a specific order, based on the desired length and width of the warp.

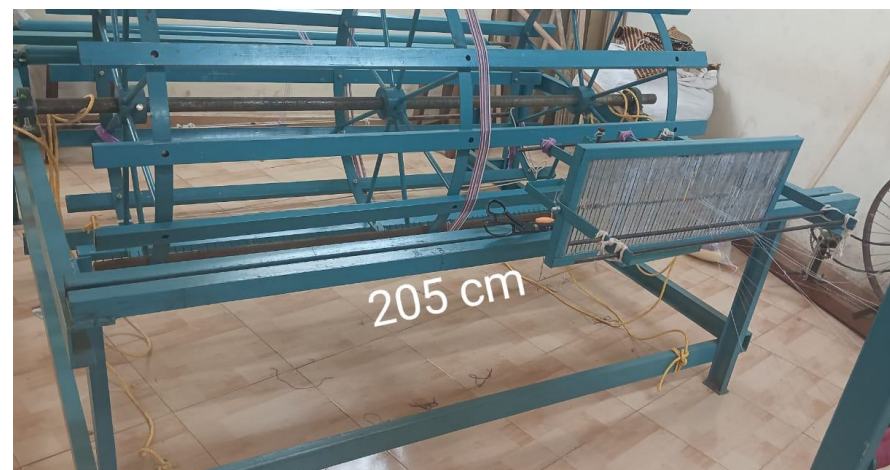
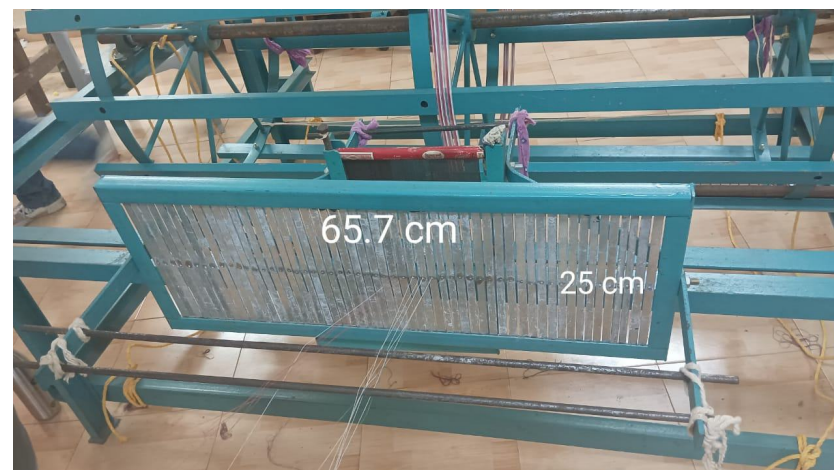
The warp threads are then transferred as a whole onto a weaver's beam by unwinding them from the drum. [13]



Creel Frame

During the warping process, the creel is vital in ensuring a smooth and organized yarn-handling process. As a support system for yarn cones and packages, creel provides stability and accessibility.

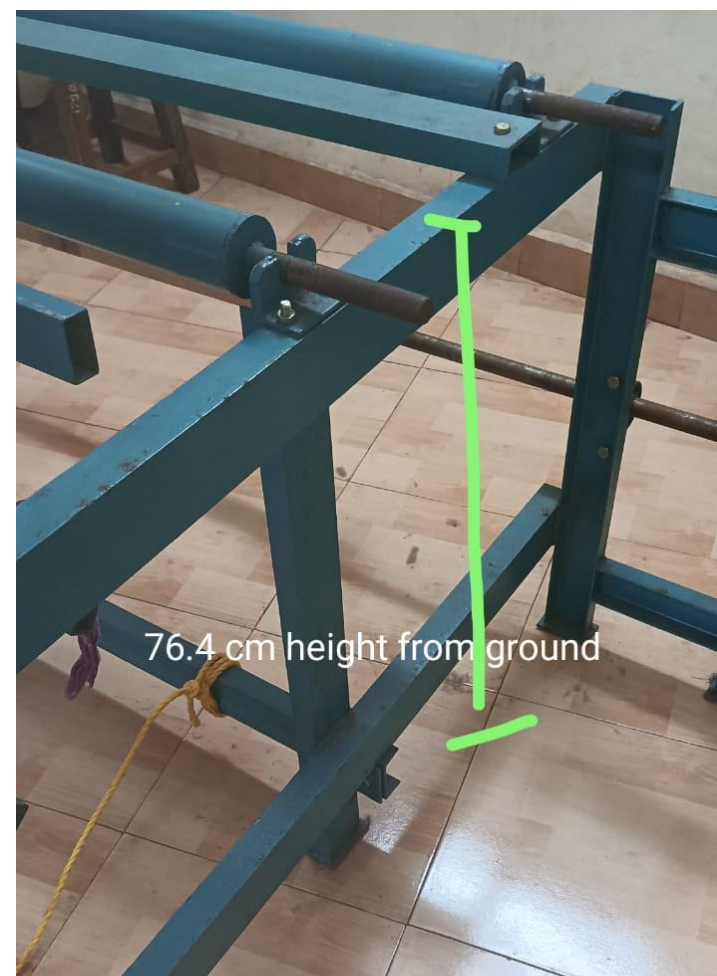
Creels often contain multiple levels or sections, each holding a specific number of yarn cones or packages. This arrangement ensures that the yarn for warping is easily accessed.

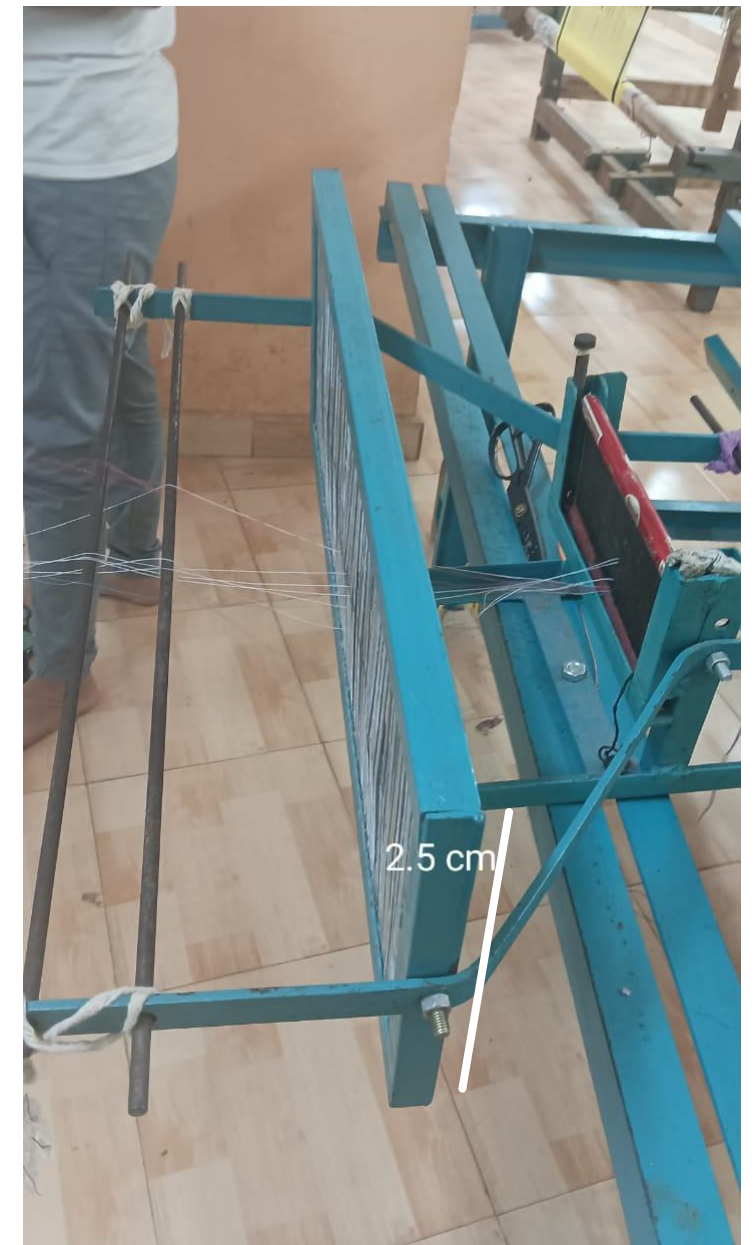
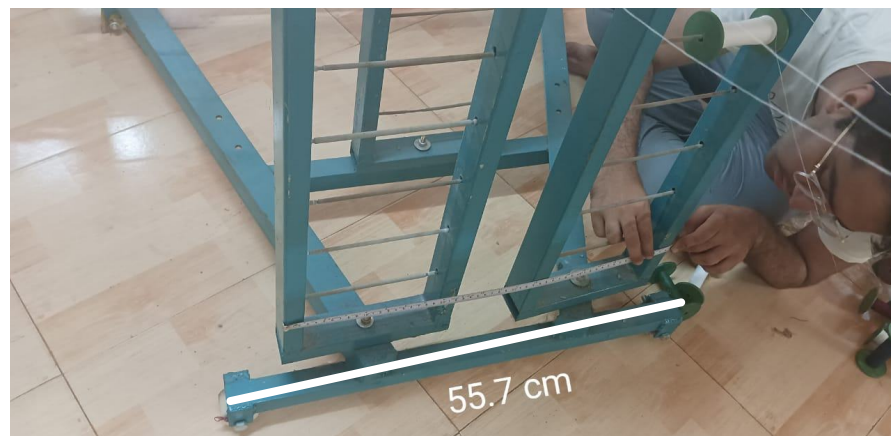
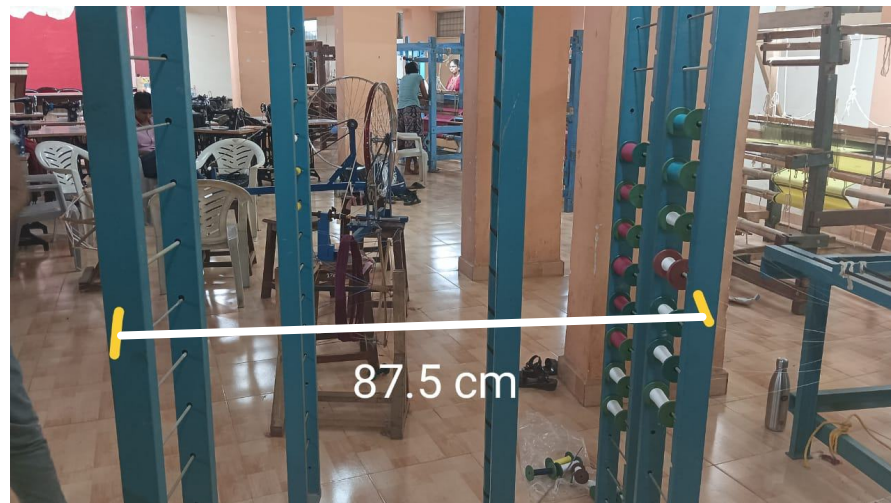


Top Left:
Dimensions of Reed in the Drum

Side:
Length of frame of the Drum

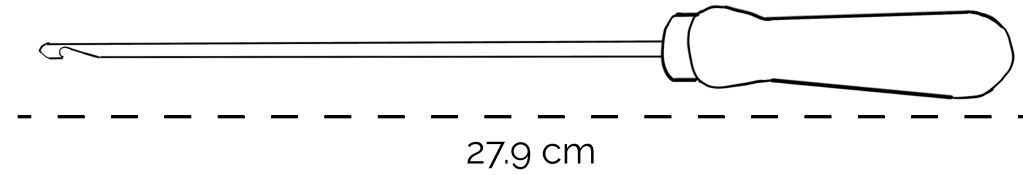
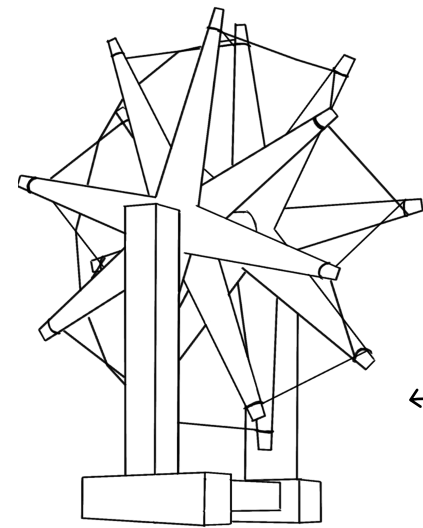
Bottom:
Dimensions of Drum.





Images (Right top, Right middle and Right bottom and Top):
Various Dimensions of the Creel stand.

Top:
Height of Reed on the Drum



Reed Hook

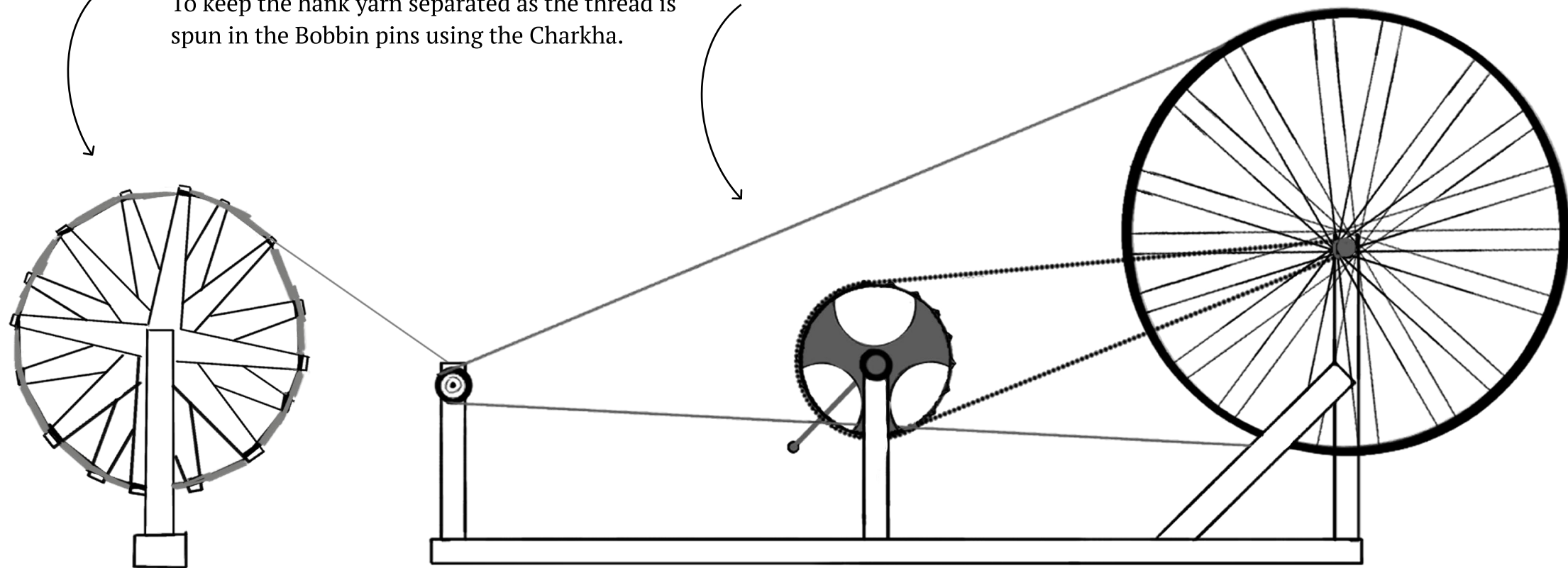
This needle helps fill the threads through Reeds of the Drum.

Charkha

The charkha, a small, portable, hand-cranked wheel, is ideal for spinning cotton and other fine, short-staple fibres, though it can be used to spin other fibres as well.

Shift

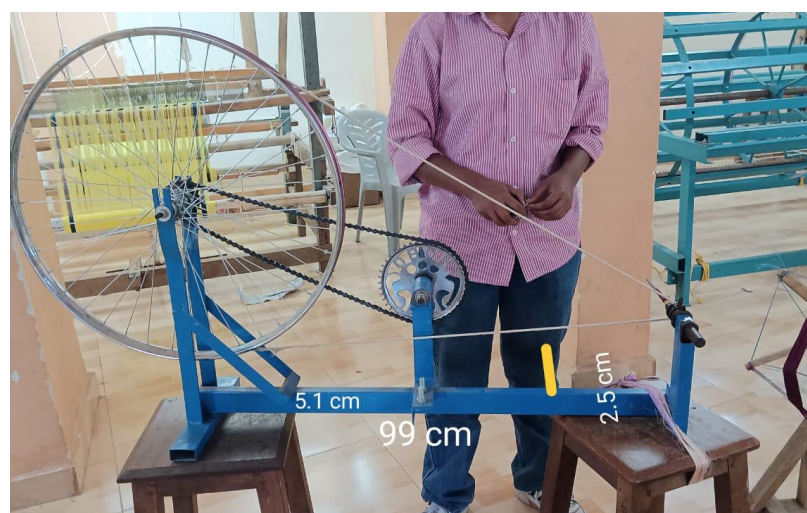
To keep the hank yarn separated as the thread is spun in the Bobbin pins using the Charkha.





Side, Bottom left, , Bottom middle & Bottom Right :
Various measurements of the Charkha

Top Left and Top middle :
Various measurements of the Shift



.03

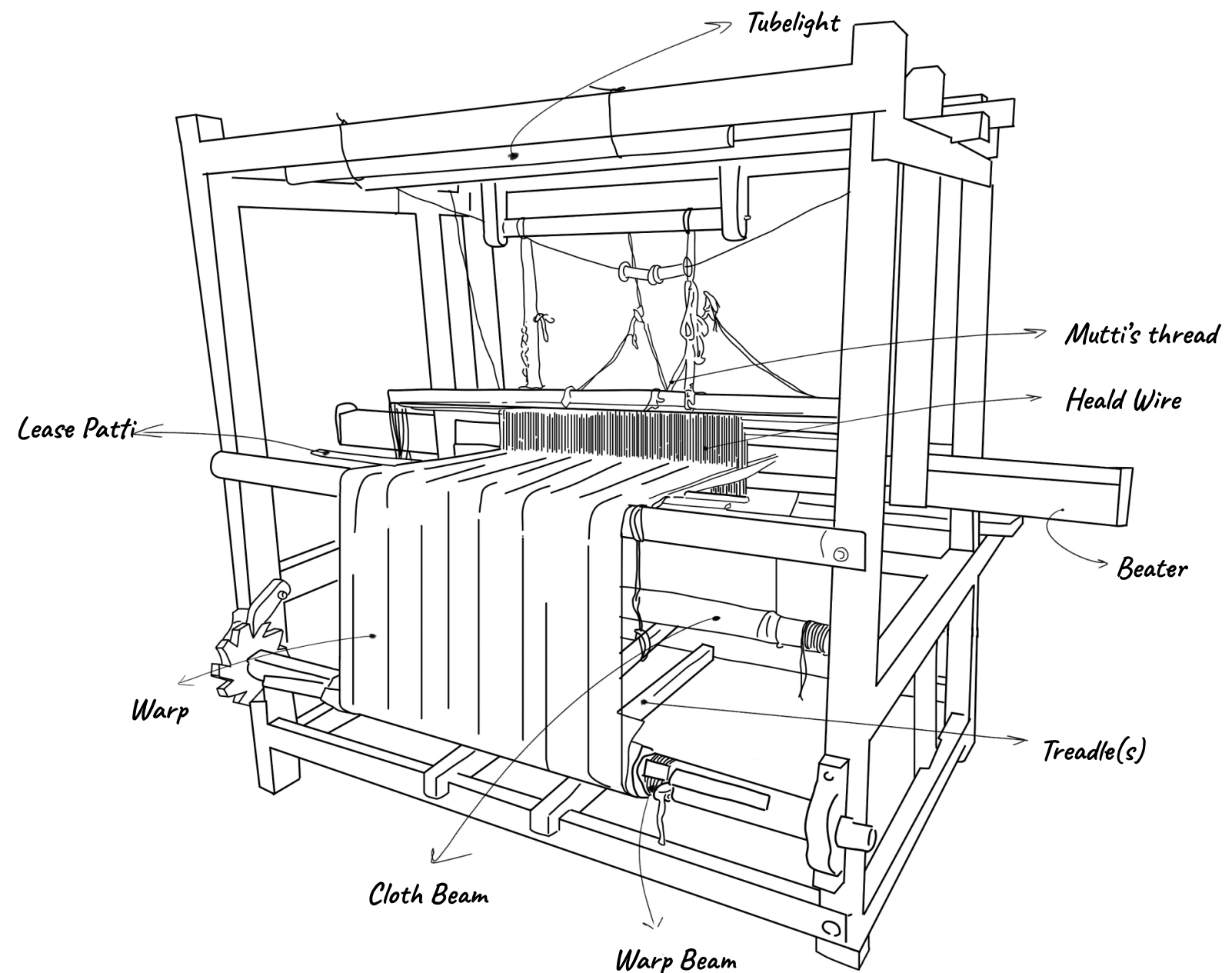
The Handloom

A hand loom is a simple machine used for weaving. In a wooden vertical-shaft looms, the heddles are fixed in place in the shaft. This loom is powered by hand. The warp threads pass alternately through a heddle, and through a space between the heddles (the shed), so that raising the shaft raises half the threads (those passing through the heddles), and lowering the shaft lowers the same threads—the threads passing through the spaces between the heddles remain in place. [14]

Basically there are two types of handloom:

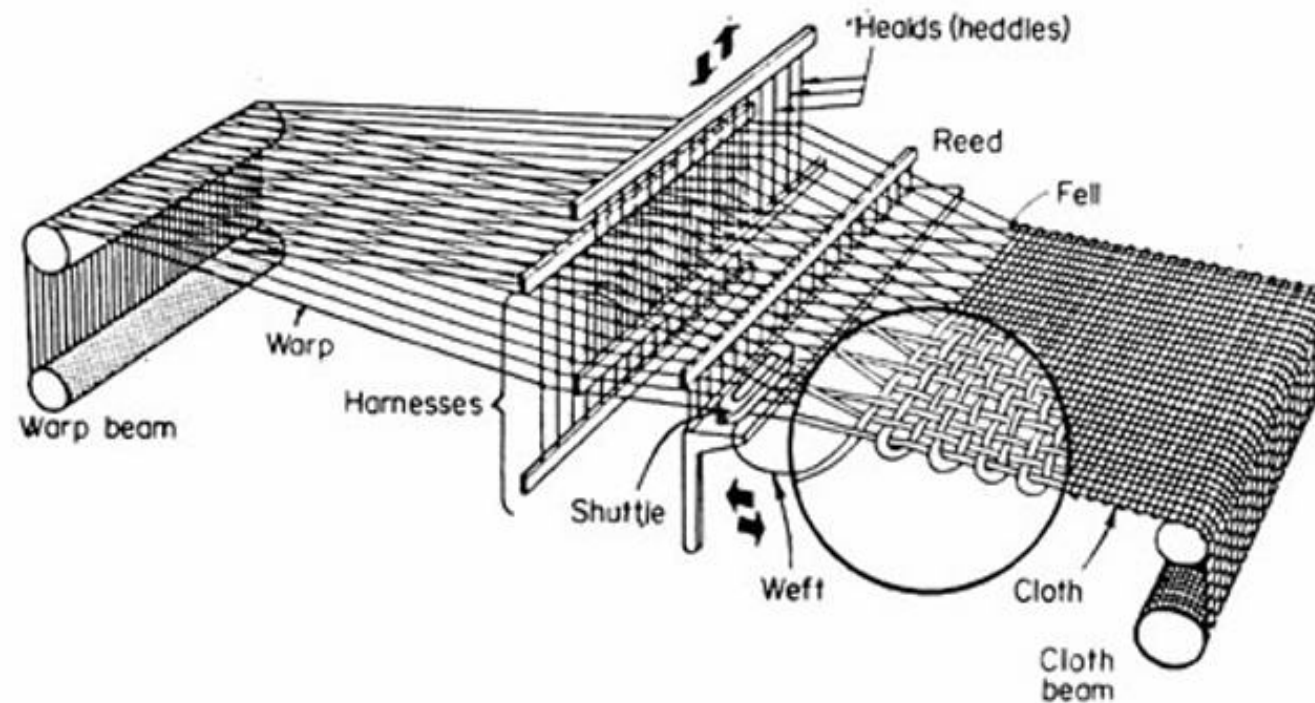
1. Frame loom
2. Pit loom

These could be further divided in to fly shuttle and throw shuttle looms.

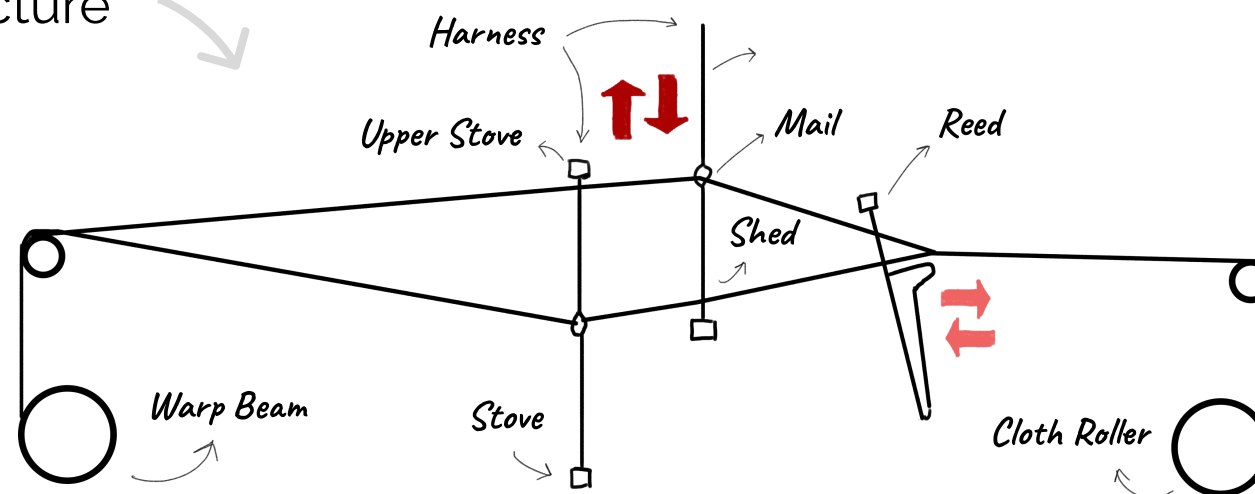


Parts of Handloom

Figure 17.5 The key parts of a loom. Source: Wood, 2006.



Handloom
Structure



Primary Motions in Weaving

Shedding Motion ↑↓

Shedding separates the warp yarns into two layers for the insertion of a pick. The function of shedding mechanism is to raise & lower the heddles. Which carry a group warp ends drawn through heald eye. There are different kinds of shedding mechanism like Tappet, Jacquard etc. [15]

Picking Motion

Picking motion inserts a pick (weft) from one side to the other side of the fabric. In Hand looms, pick is inserted with the help of a shuttle through the shed opened by the shedding mechanism. i.e. between the two layers of warp shed.[16]

Beating Up ⇄

The function of beat up mechanism is to push the weft thread that has been inserted across the warp threads in a shed, up to the fell of cloth. Fell of the cloth is the position of the last pick in cloth woven on the loom. The beating-up of the weft to the fell of cloth is carried out by the reed. [15]

Cloth Roller

It is located at the front of the loom. After completion of weaving the woven fabric is wound on it.[14]

Handle

The handle is provided on the warp roller to tighten or loosen the warp sheet which ultimately changes the tightness factor of the fabric.[14]

Beater

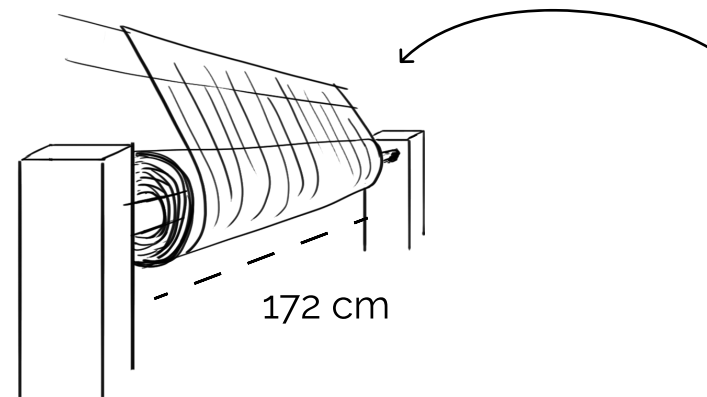
This is inevitably a combination made up of metallic wires set vertically in a frame. The spaces between the wires are known as dents. There is a beater which has a Reed frame mounted on it. The weaver holds the beater and gives beater a to and fro motion for beating the last pick to the fell of the cloth.[14]

Heddle

It is a frame to hold the heald wires. Heald wire is a wire with a hole or eye in its center through which a warp yarn is threaded. In some cases heald wires made out of cotton or synthetic yarn are also used.

Back Beam

To maintain the constant tension and proper angle to the warp sheet.[14]

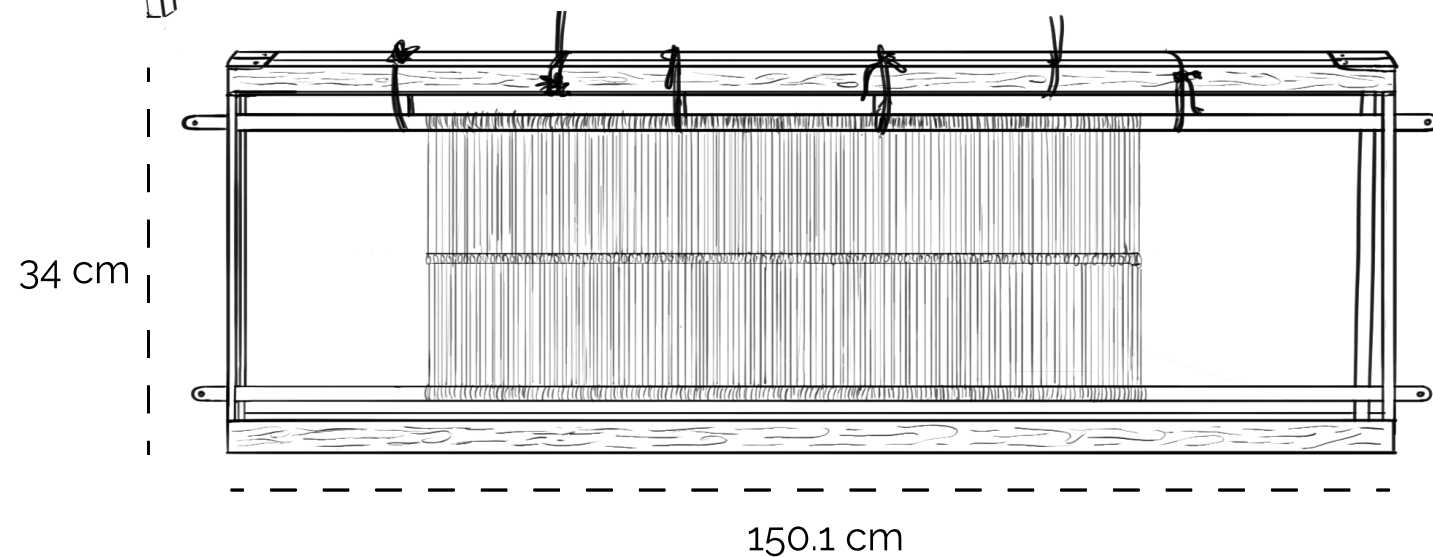
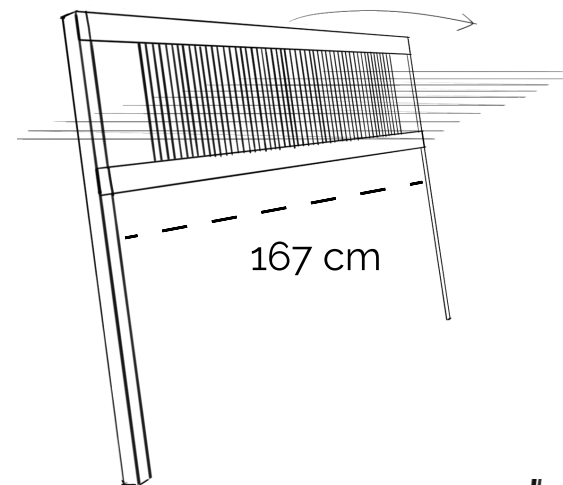


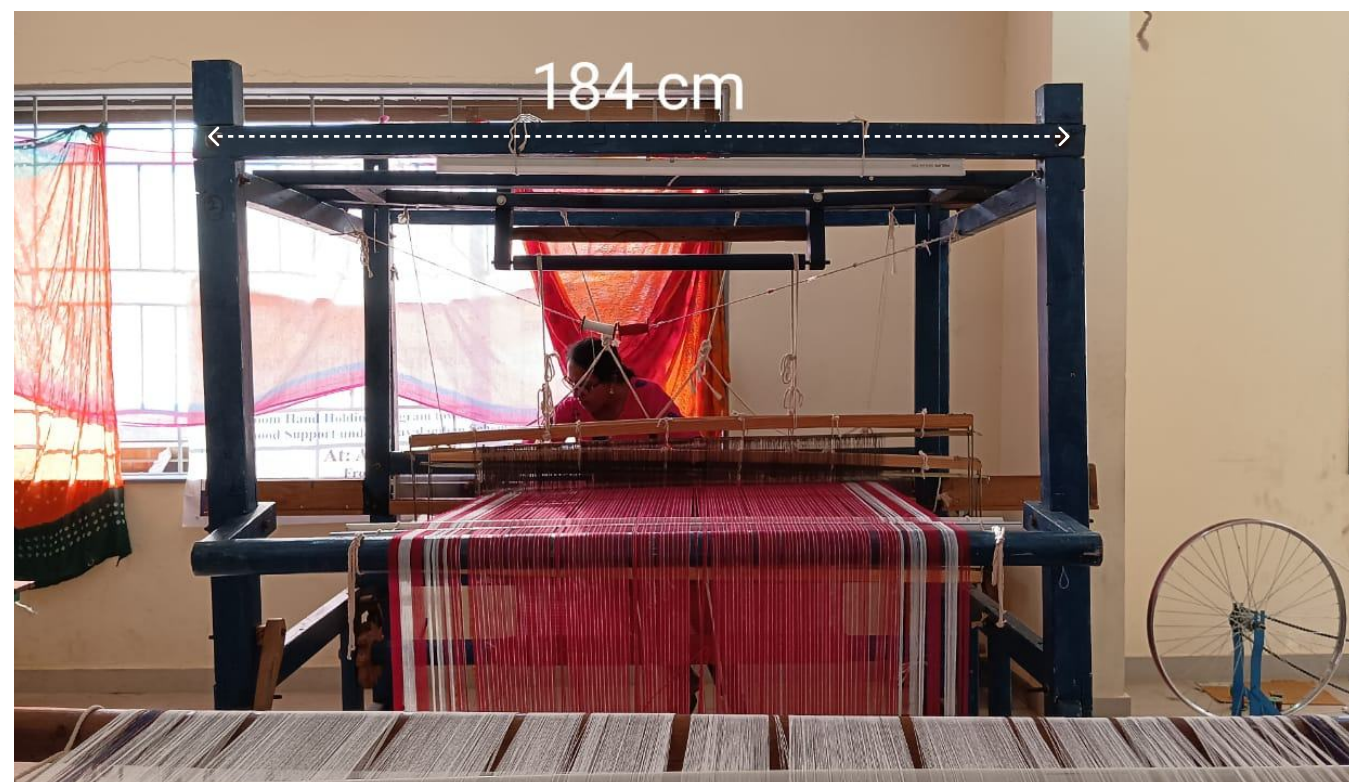
Warp Roller

The warp roller which consists of the lengthwise yarns is located at the back of the loom & it releases the warp yarn to the weaving area of the loom as needed.[14]

Treadles

These are located at the bottom of the loom and are designed to control warp shed formation by controlling the up and down movement of the heddles. The weaver presses the treadles by their feet for shed formation. [14]





Top Left:
Length and width of the beater

Top Right:
Length of the head roller

Bottom Left:
Length of the Handloom

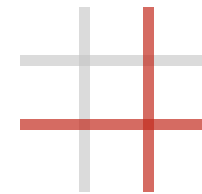
Bottom Right:
Width of the handloom

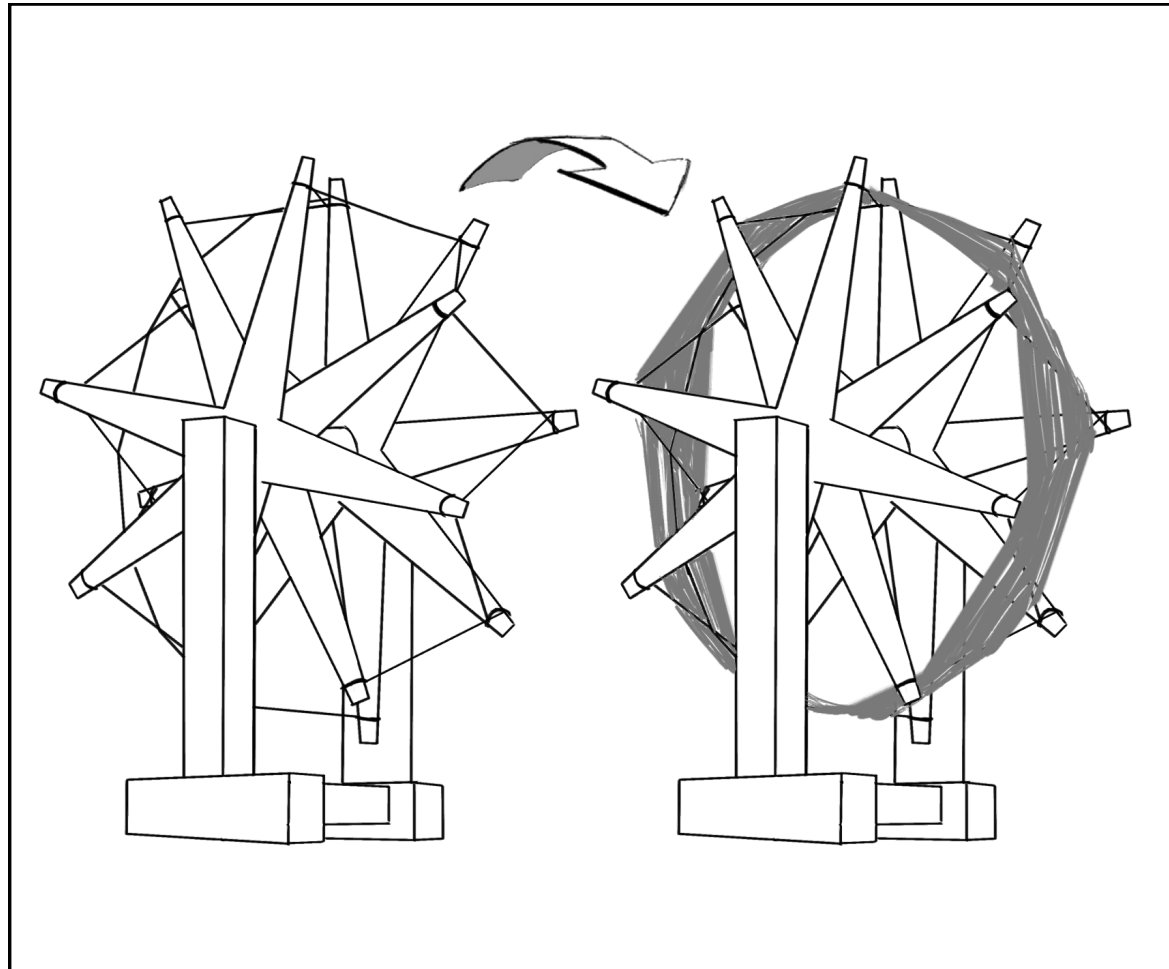
.04

The Weaving Process

Weaving is a process of fabric production in which two distinct sets of yarns are interlaced at right angles to each other to form a fabric or cloth.

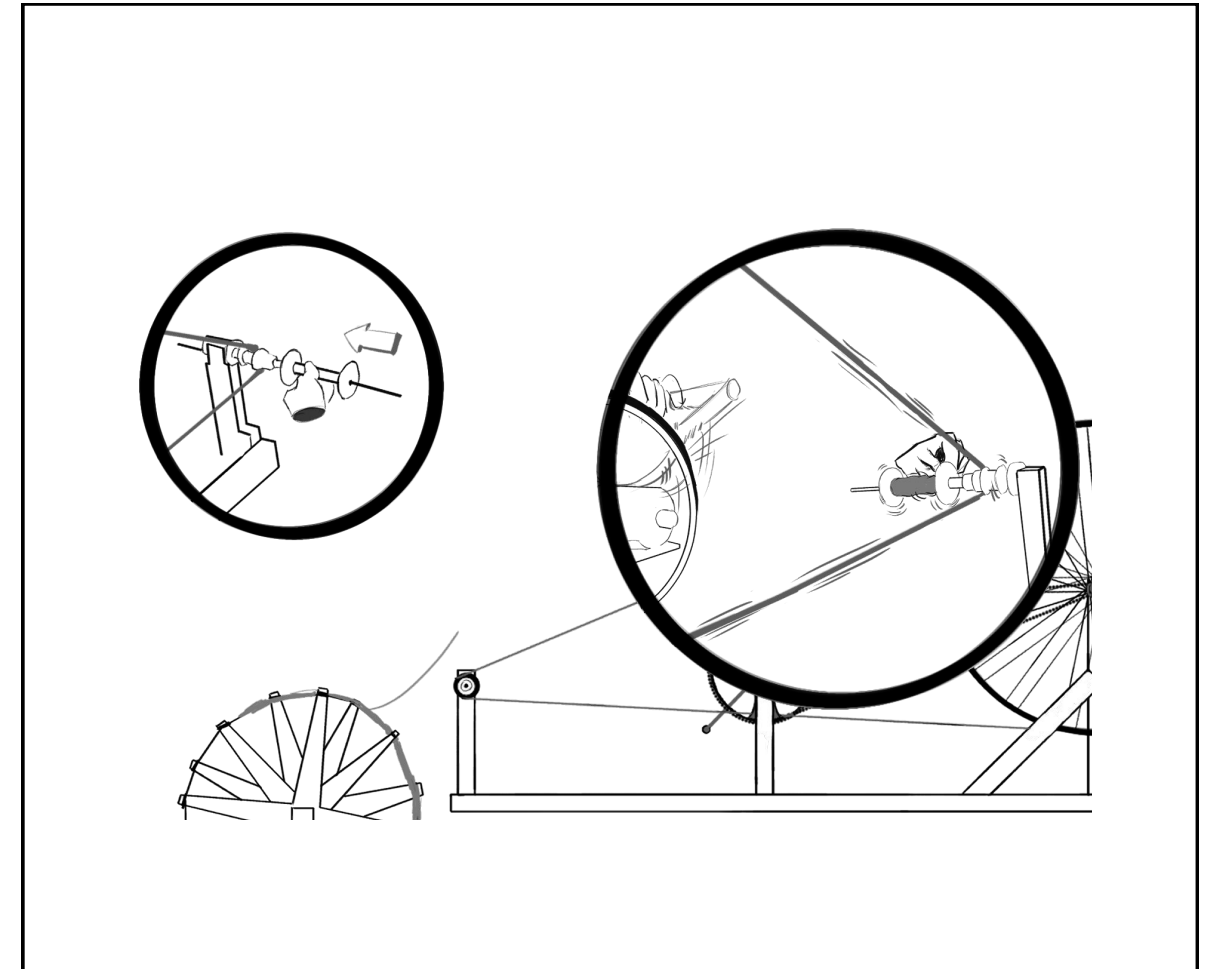
The lengthwise yarns are called the warp yarns and the widthwise yarns are called the weft yarns.





1.

In the process of *winding*, the dyed yarns are transferred onto bobbins . This is done by mounting the yarn onto the shift.



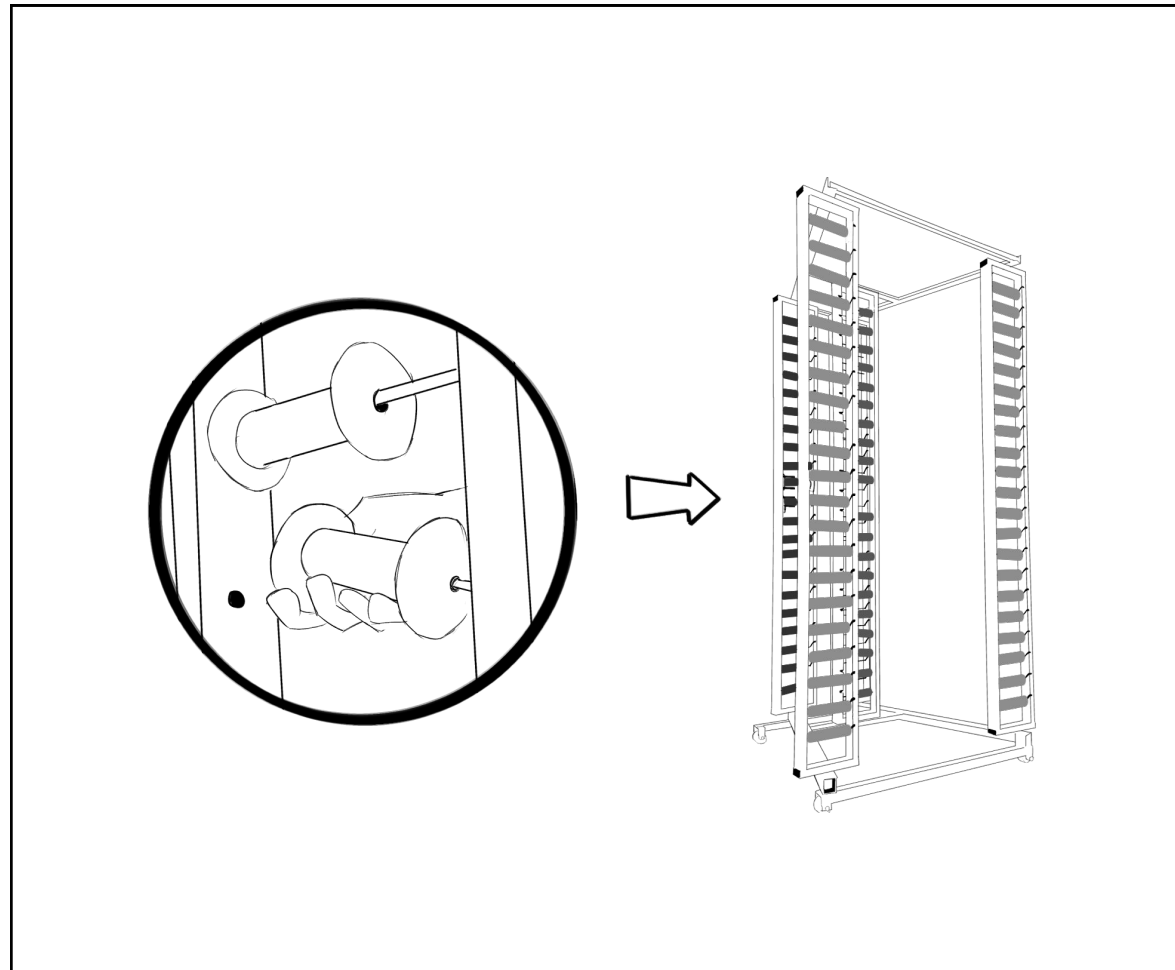
2.

From the Shift, the yarn threads are transferred into the Bobbin(s), using the *Charkha* to rotate the shift. One can see that the Bobbin(s) is positioned in the end part of the *Charkha*, which is rotated, transferring the threads from the shift to the Bobbin(s).

3.

Before fixing the warp in the Drum, the number of Bobbin(s) needed to make a particular design or weave, is decided and readied, before putting the Bobbins on the Creel frame.

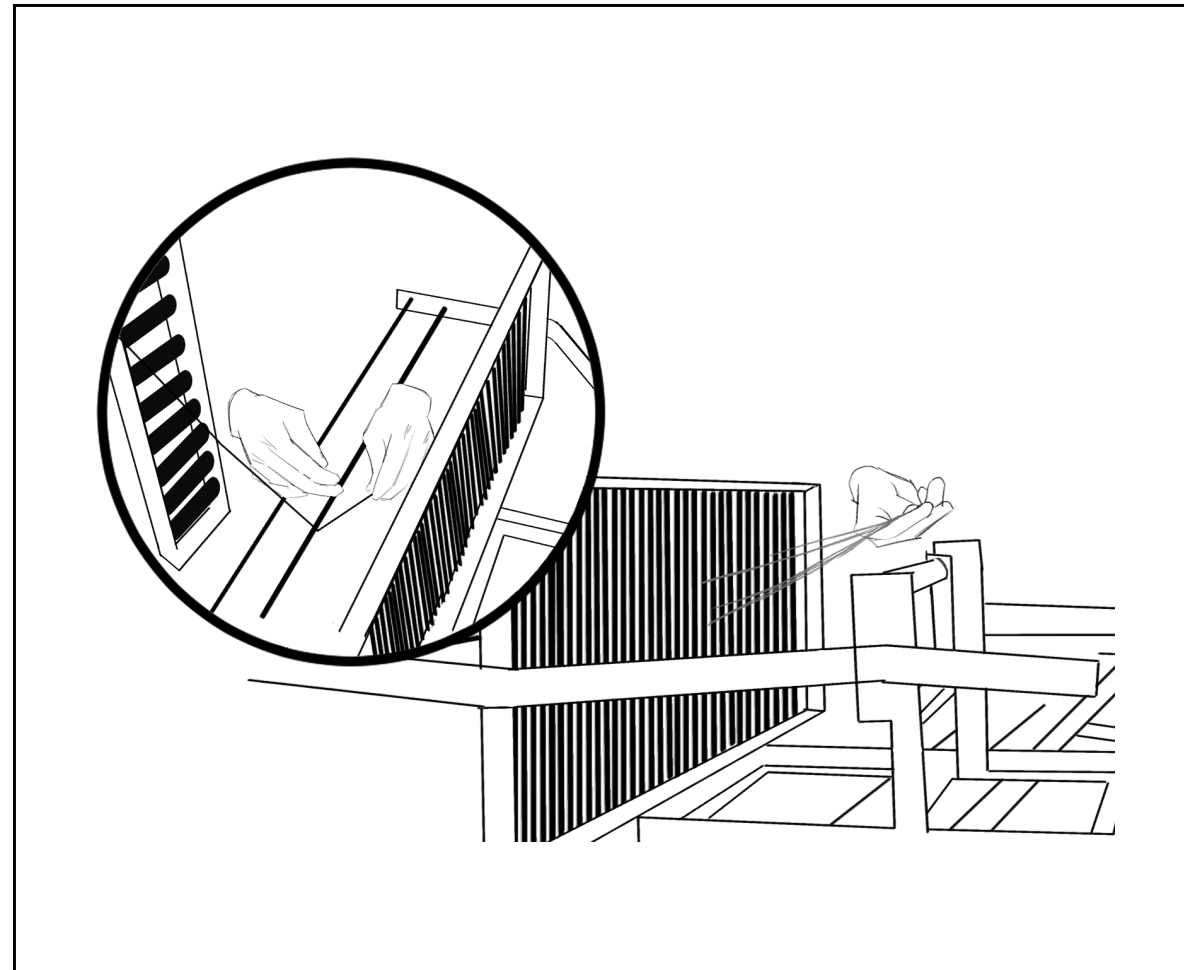
Based on the design that has been decided, the Bobbins are mounted on the Creel Frame.

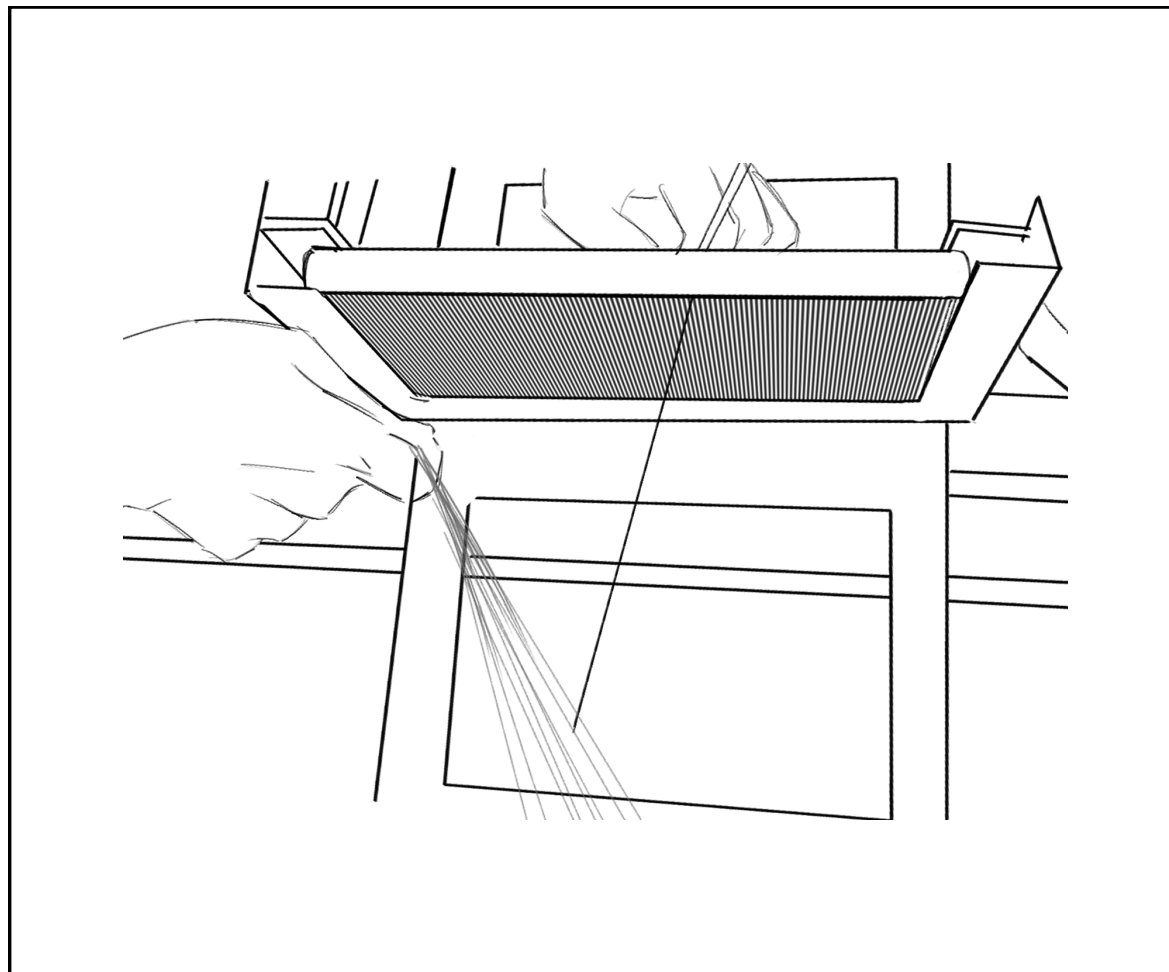


4.

Because there are going to be two different layers of threads in the Warp, in an alternate manner, each thread is passed through the Reed of the Drum by first passing it over or under the rod present front of the Reed (as shown in the image). Then, based on the pattern, the threads are inserted in the reed, through the holes in the thin plate or between the thin plates.

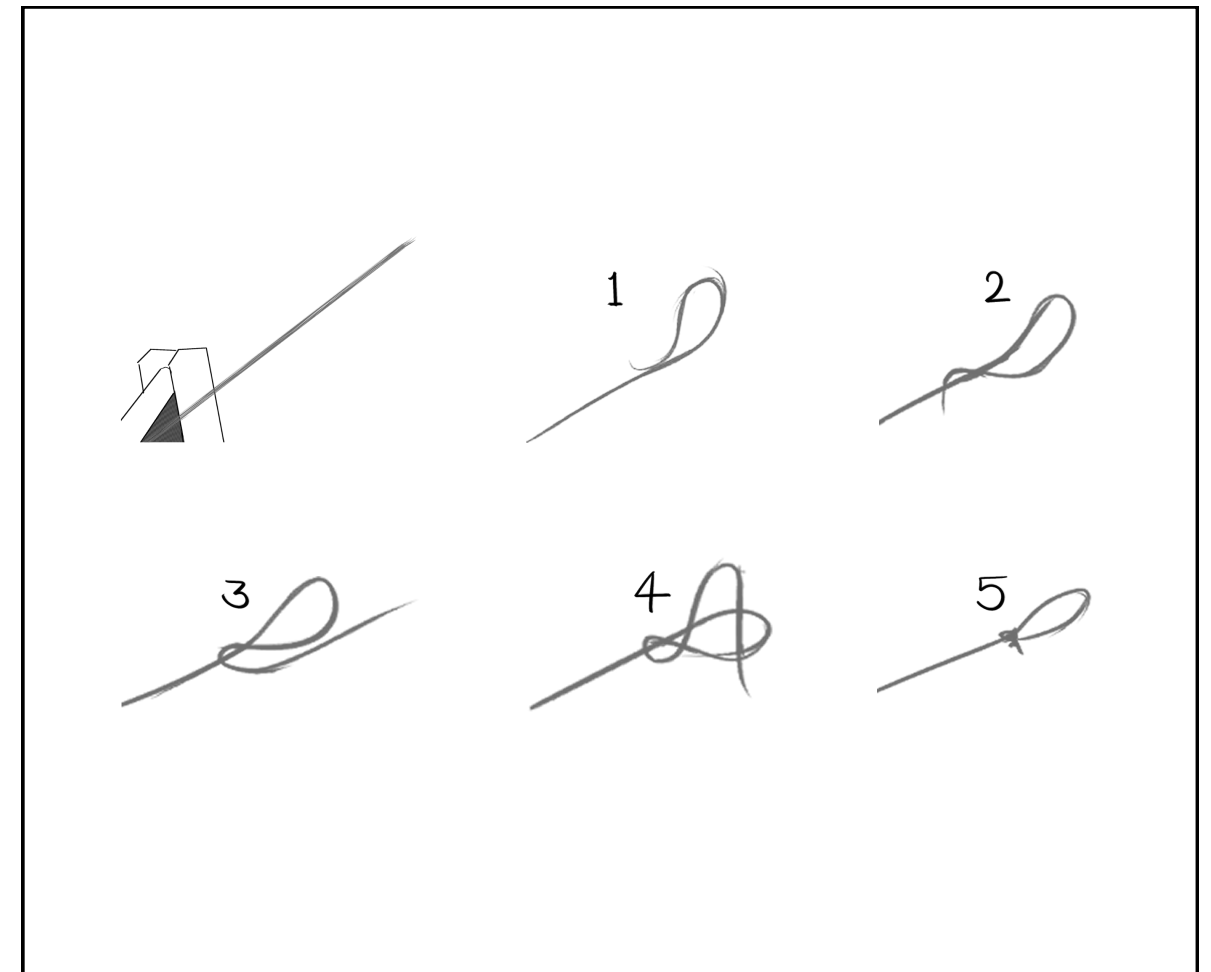
It is important to note that the amount of threads is calculated based on how many of them will be present in one inch of the *saree*.





5.

Once through the Reed, using the Reed hook, the threads are further passed through another type of Reed, where each thread is separated.

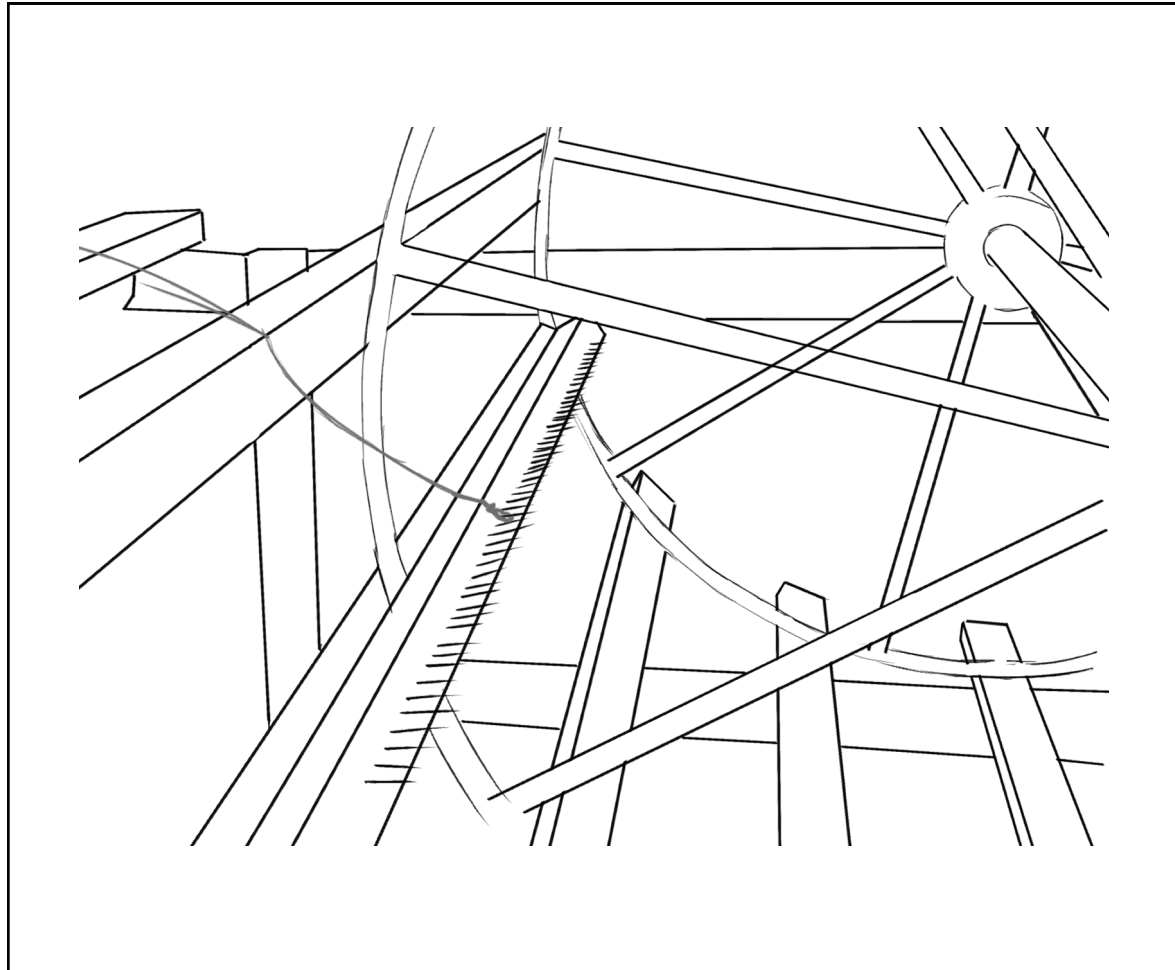


6.

This is the **Weaver's Knot**. This knot is made once all the threads are passed through the secondary Reed of the drum. This thread helps in securing the 'one inch of warp', so that it does not open and so that it can be hooked to the nails in the drum. (The nails of the drum will become clear in the following panel.)

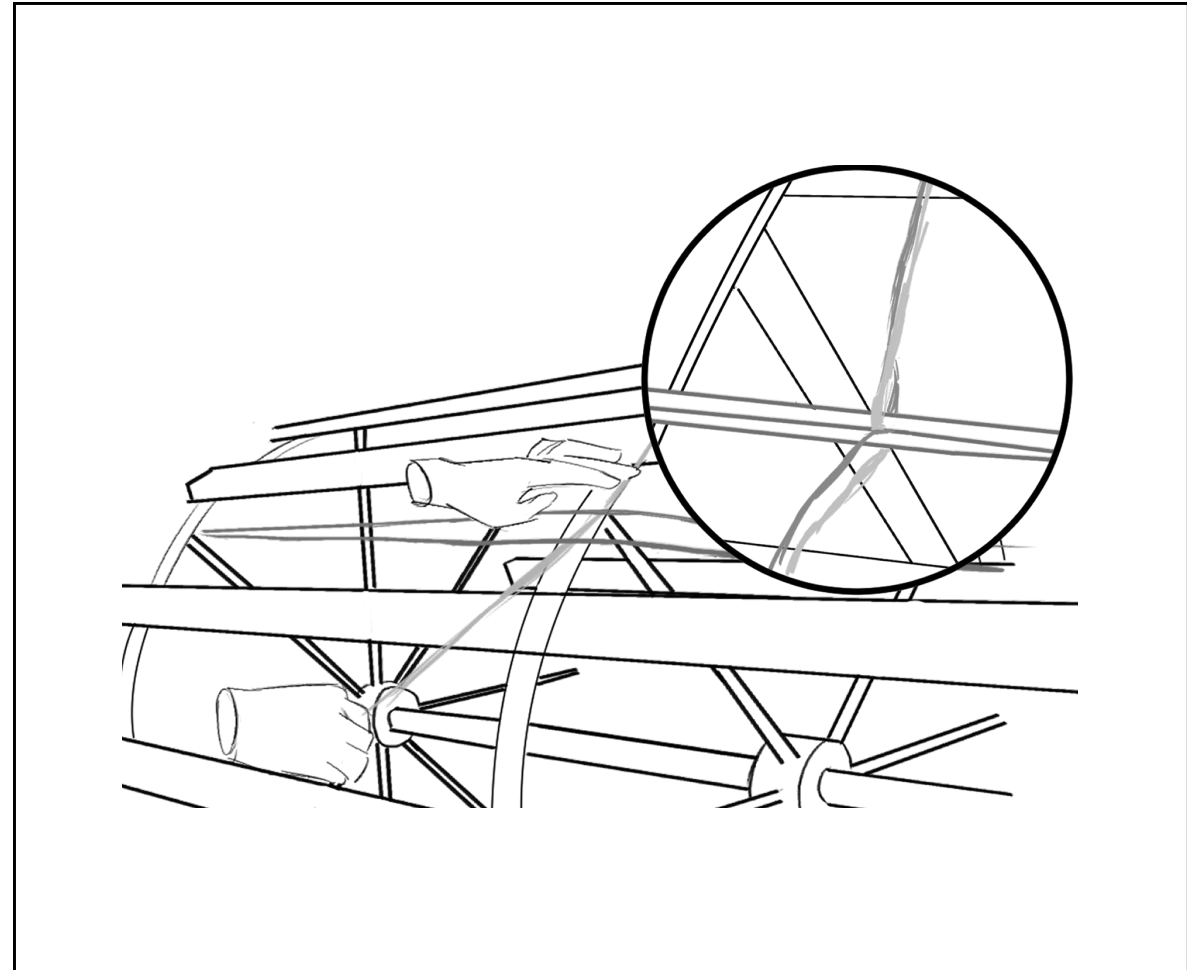
7.

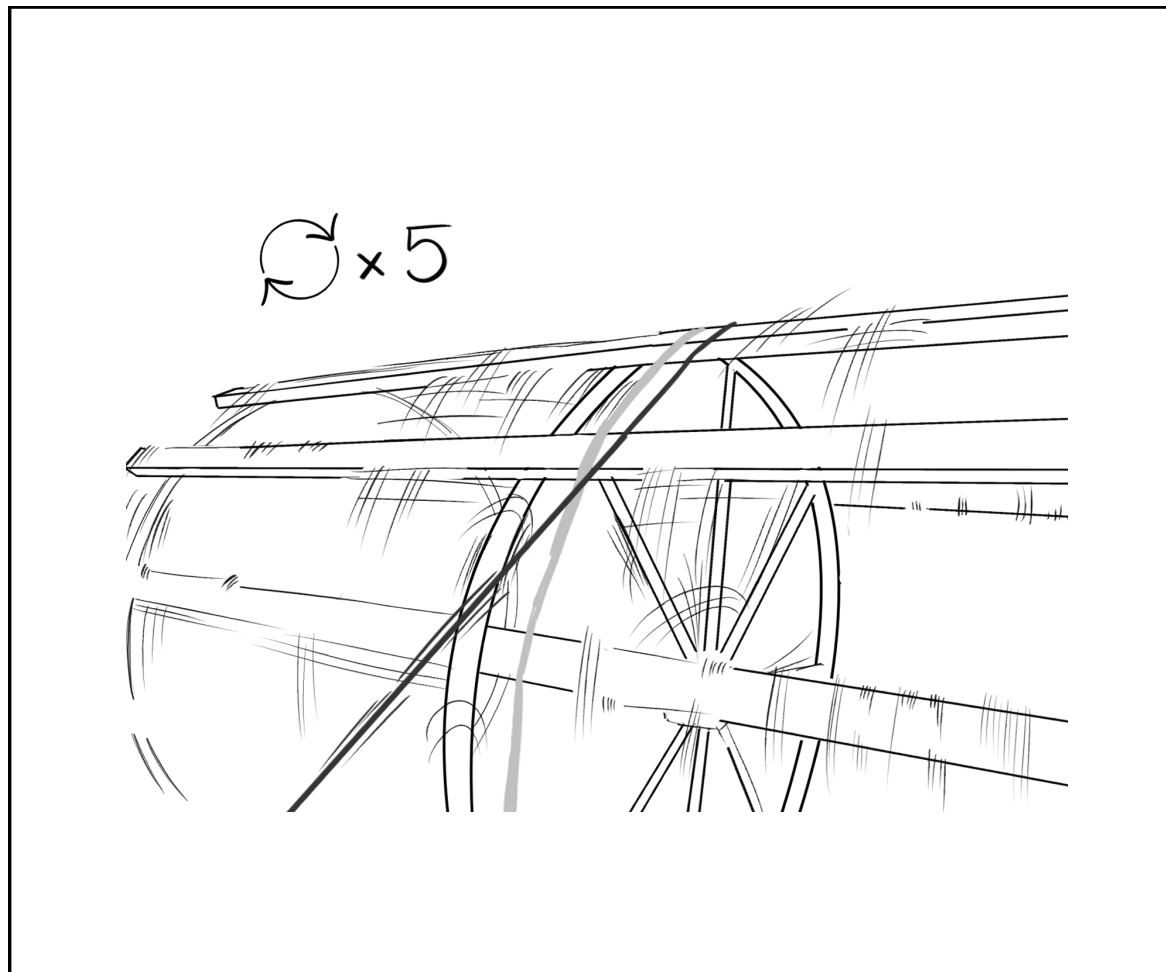
The nails of the drum are placed one inch apart from one another. The threads tied together using the weavers knot is secured to one of the nails.



8.

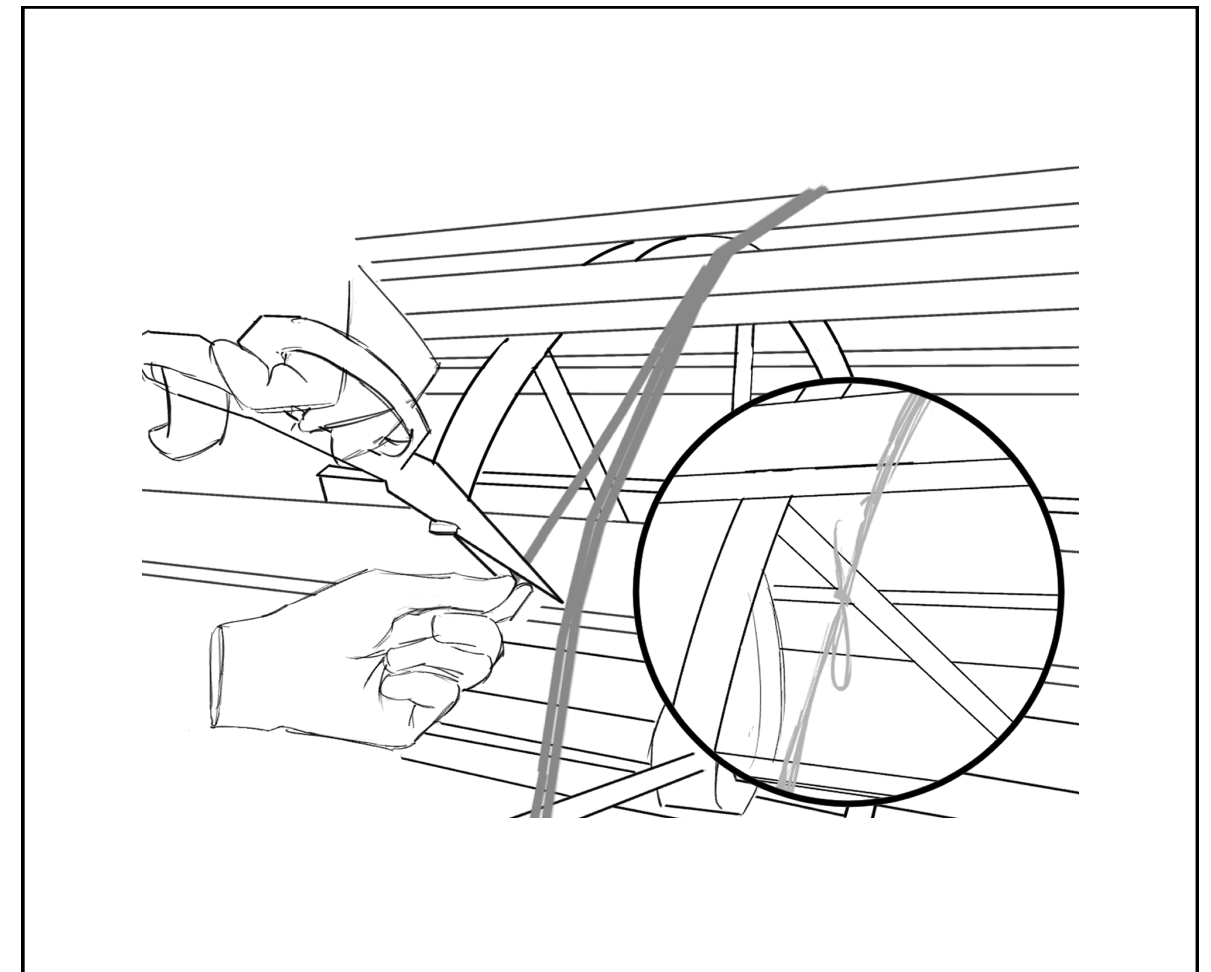
A piece of long stick a.k.a. a '*lease patti*' is secured in between the two groups of threads so that the threads do not tangle with one another.





9.

The Drum is rotated five times to extirpate the right length of thread which will produce exactly two *sarees* (at least that is the case for the Ponda Handloom)



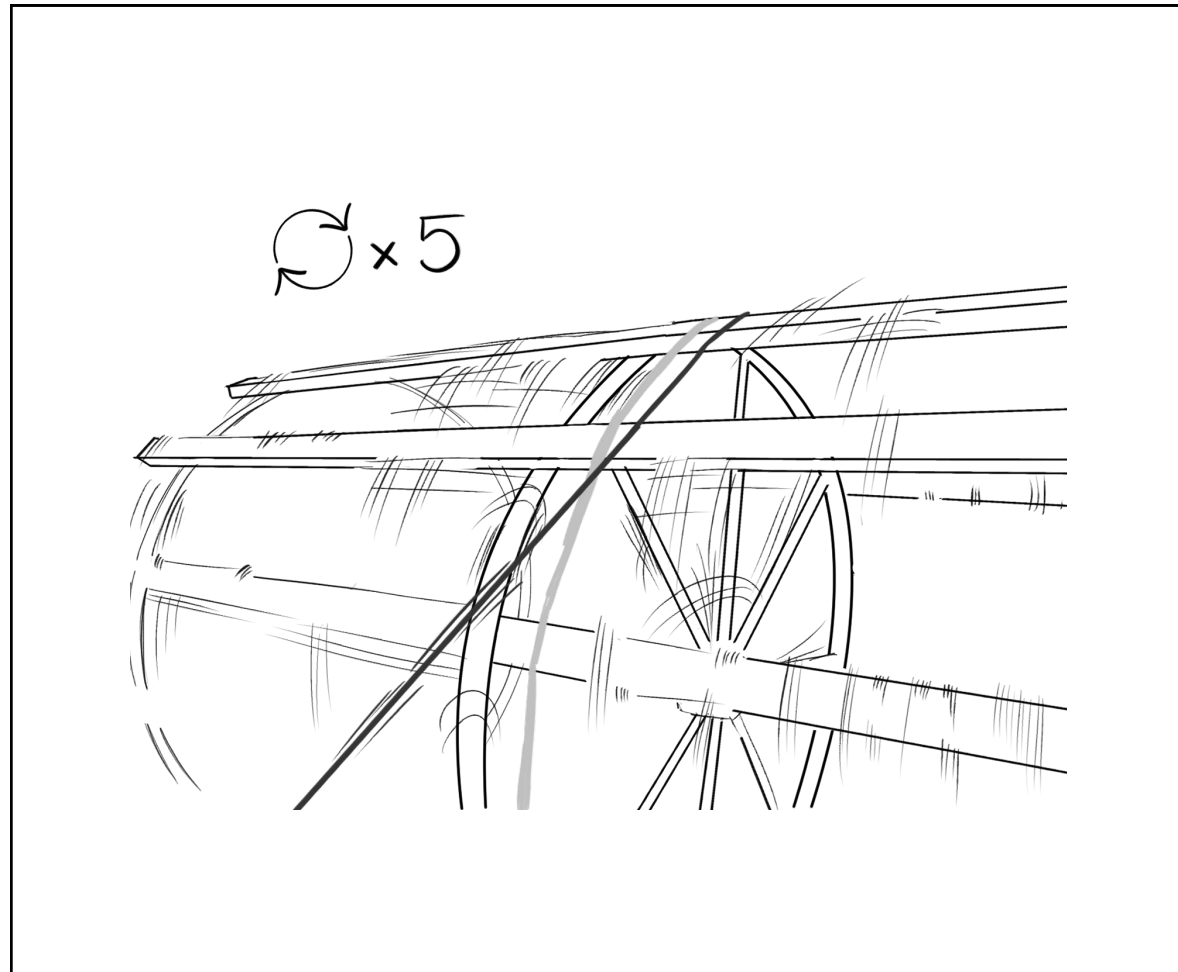
10.

Once the threads are done being wrapped around the drum, the threads are cut and fastened with a knot.

And that is where one inch of the warp is finally finished.

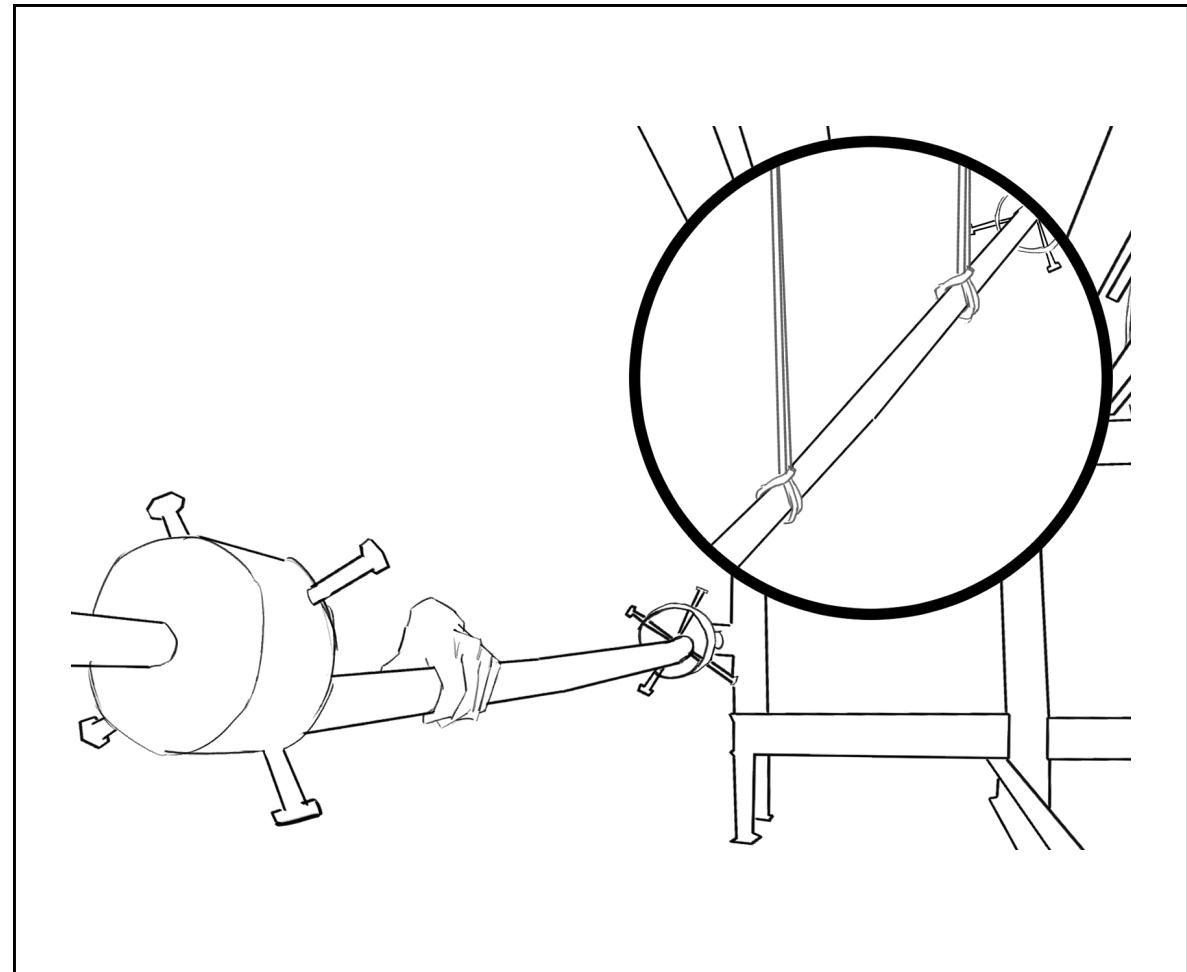
11.

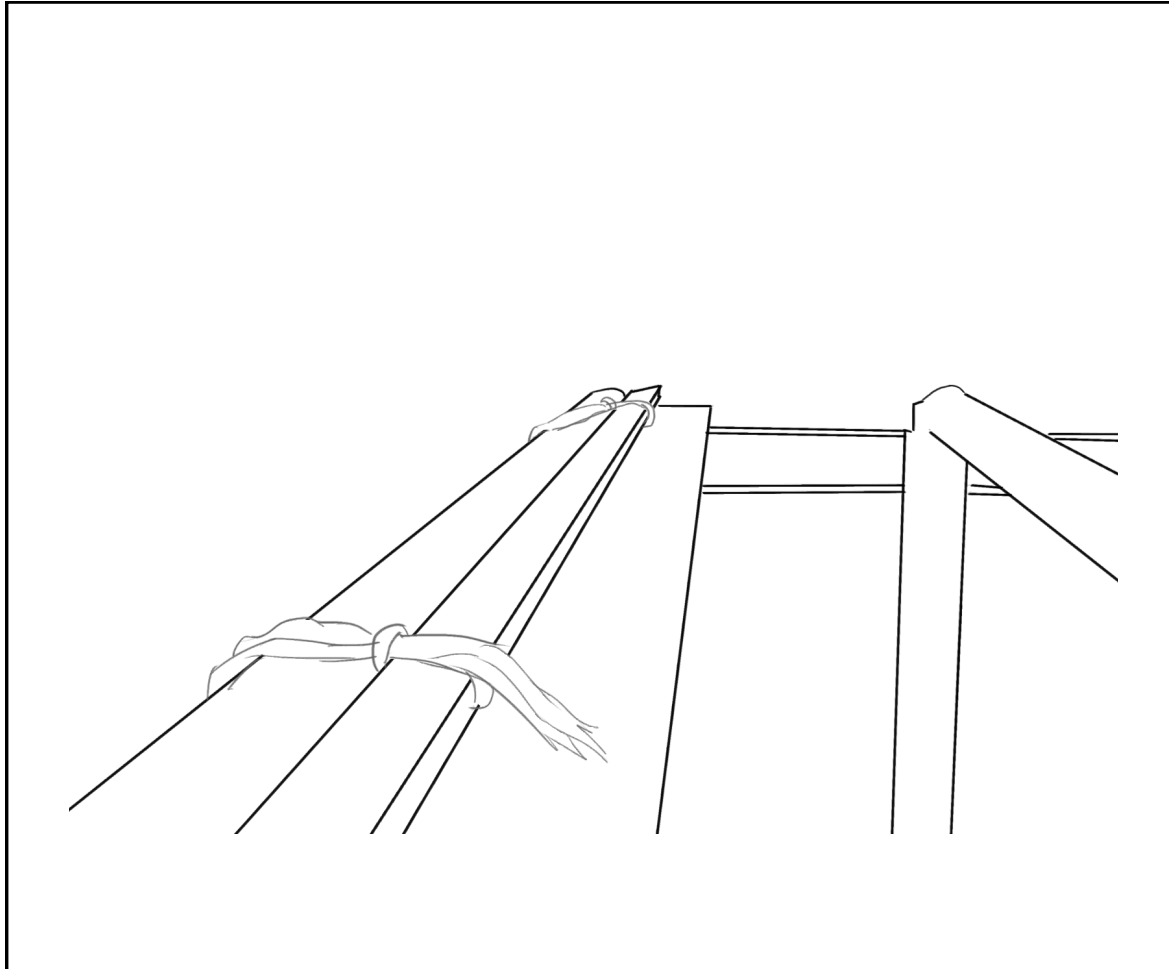
The steps 5 to 12 is REPEATED until each of the nails are filled in the drum.



12.

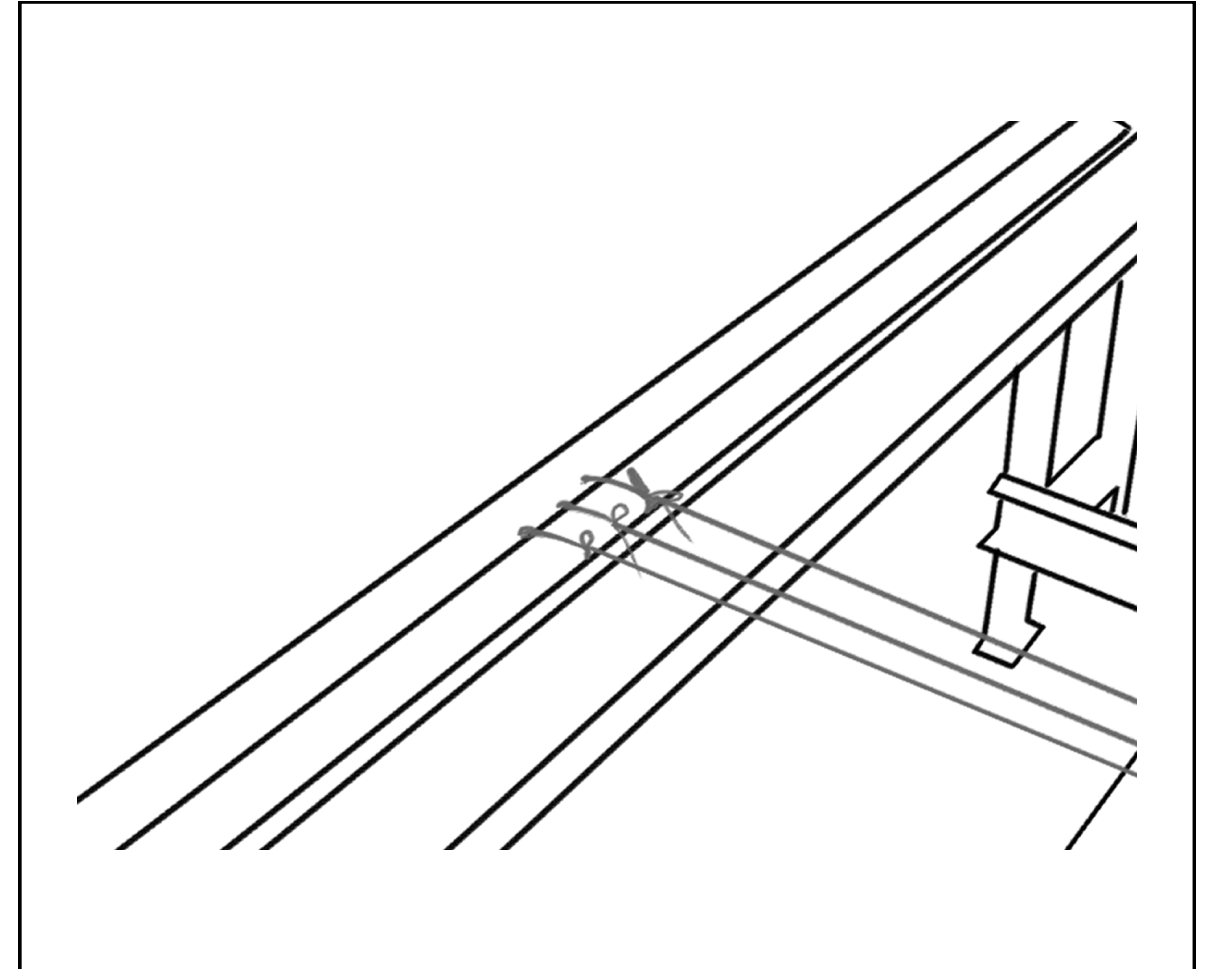
The beam (*a thick bamboo pole*) is secured in the lower back of the drum.





13.

And another stick similar to the '*lease patti*' is attached to the beam.

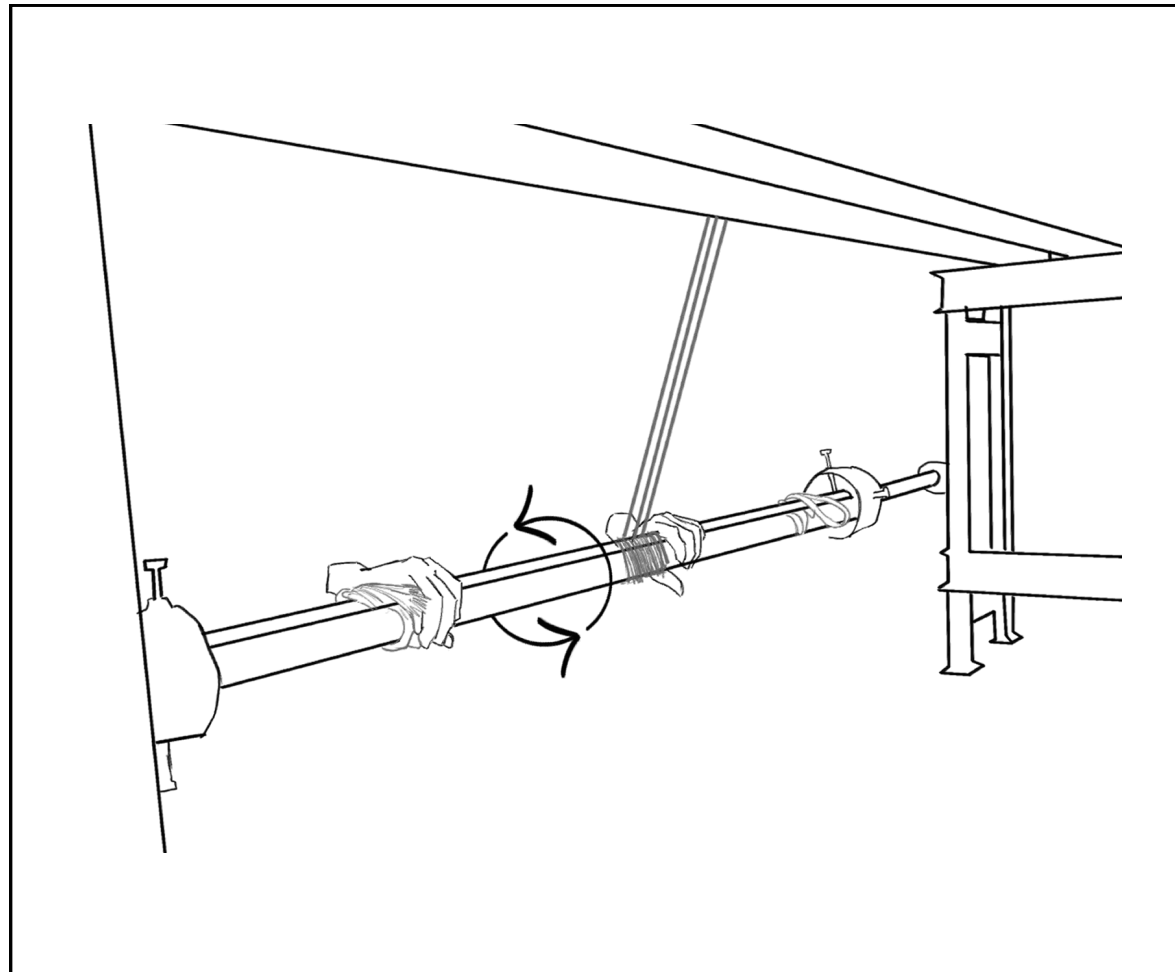


14.

Each group of threads that were fastened (*like in step 12*) to themselves are opened and are knotted on the '*lease patti*' until all but none are remaining.

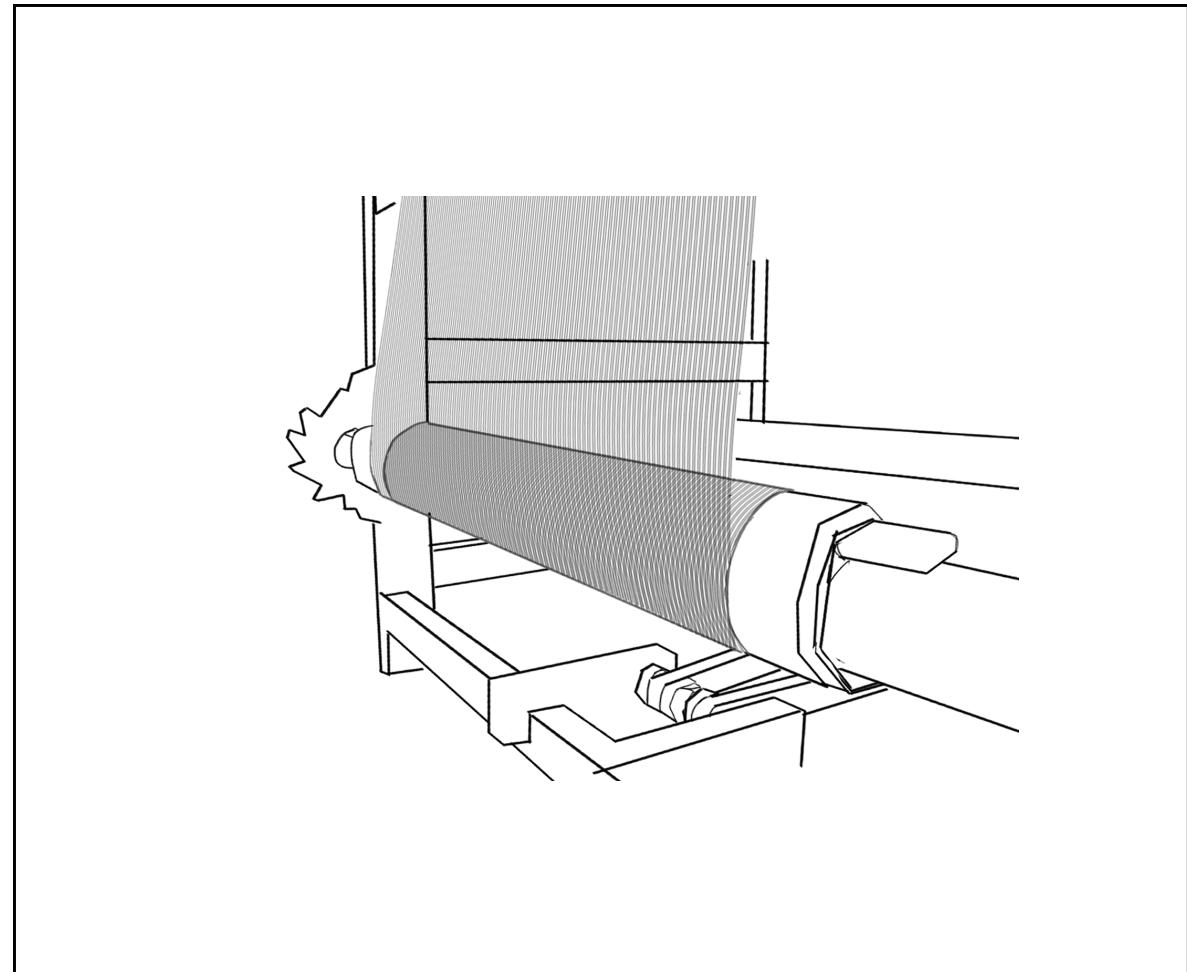
15.

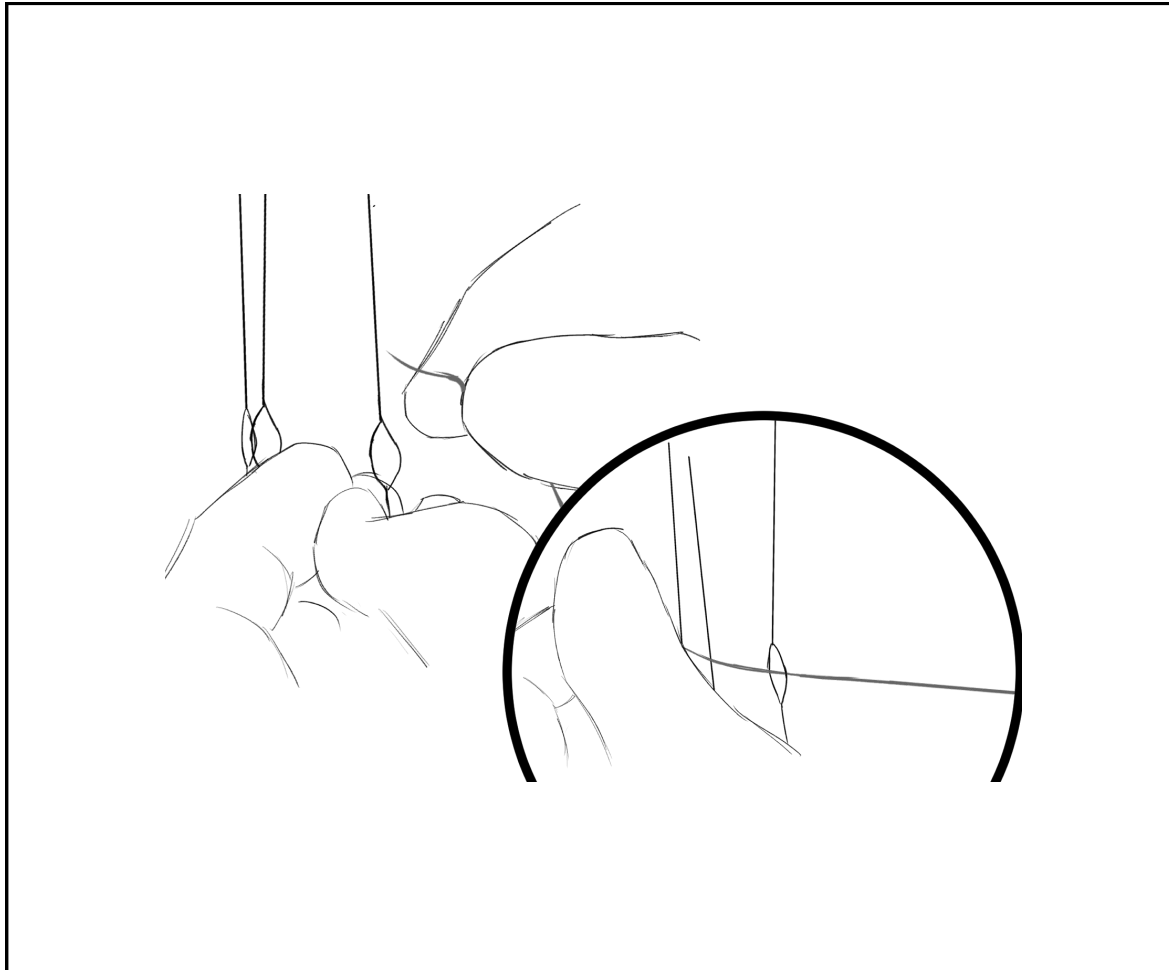
Once secured, the beam is rotated along the horizontal axis and the rope that held the '*lease patti*' is roped on the beam, followed by all the threads that were roped on the drum and eventually, the entire warp is shifted to the beam.



16.

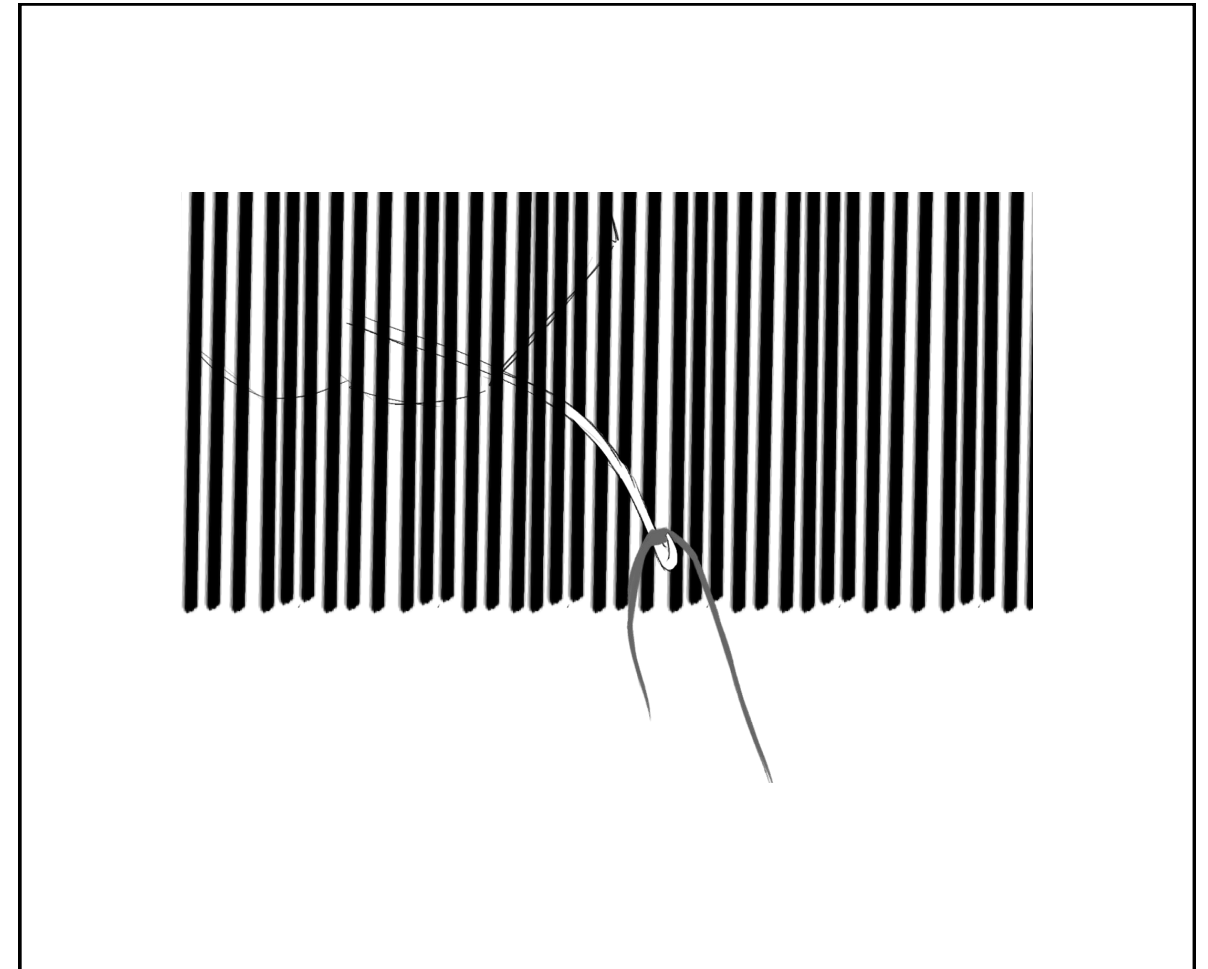
The beam, now wrapped with the threads from the Drum, is secured on the front part of the handloom, which becomes the Warp beam.





17.

Each thread from the Warp beam is then passed through the heedle wires in the handloom. This process is called **Drafting**.



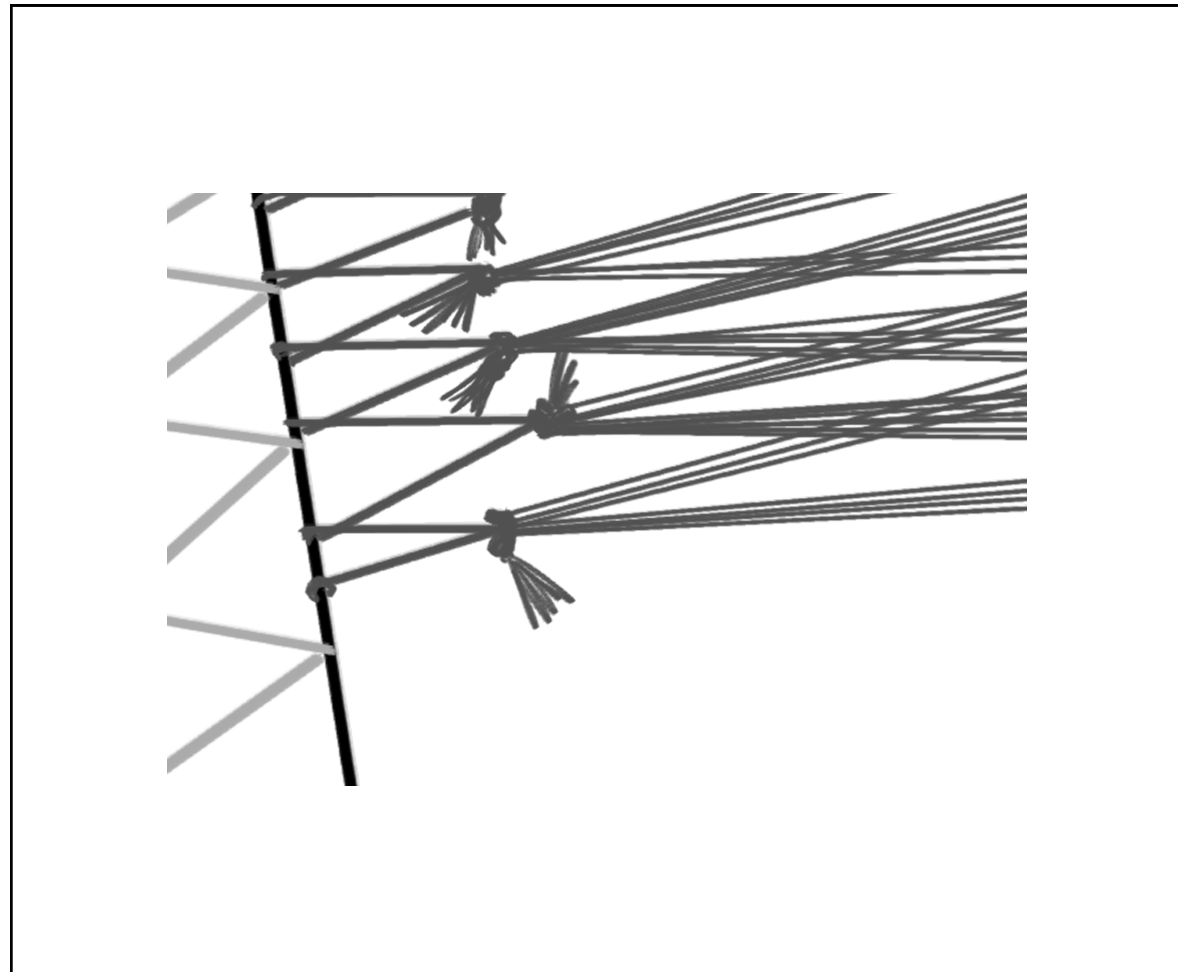
18.

This step of passing the drawing in ends through the reed for beating purpose is called **Denting**. There can be two ends per dent or three ends per dent, according to the requirement.

This step is similar to Step 6, using the Reed hook, the threads are made to pass from the Reeds of the Beater (*refer to the image of handloom*).

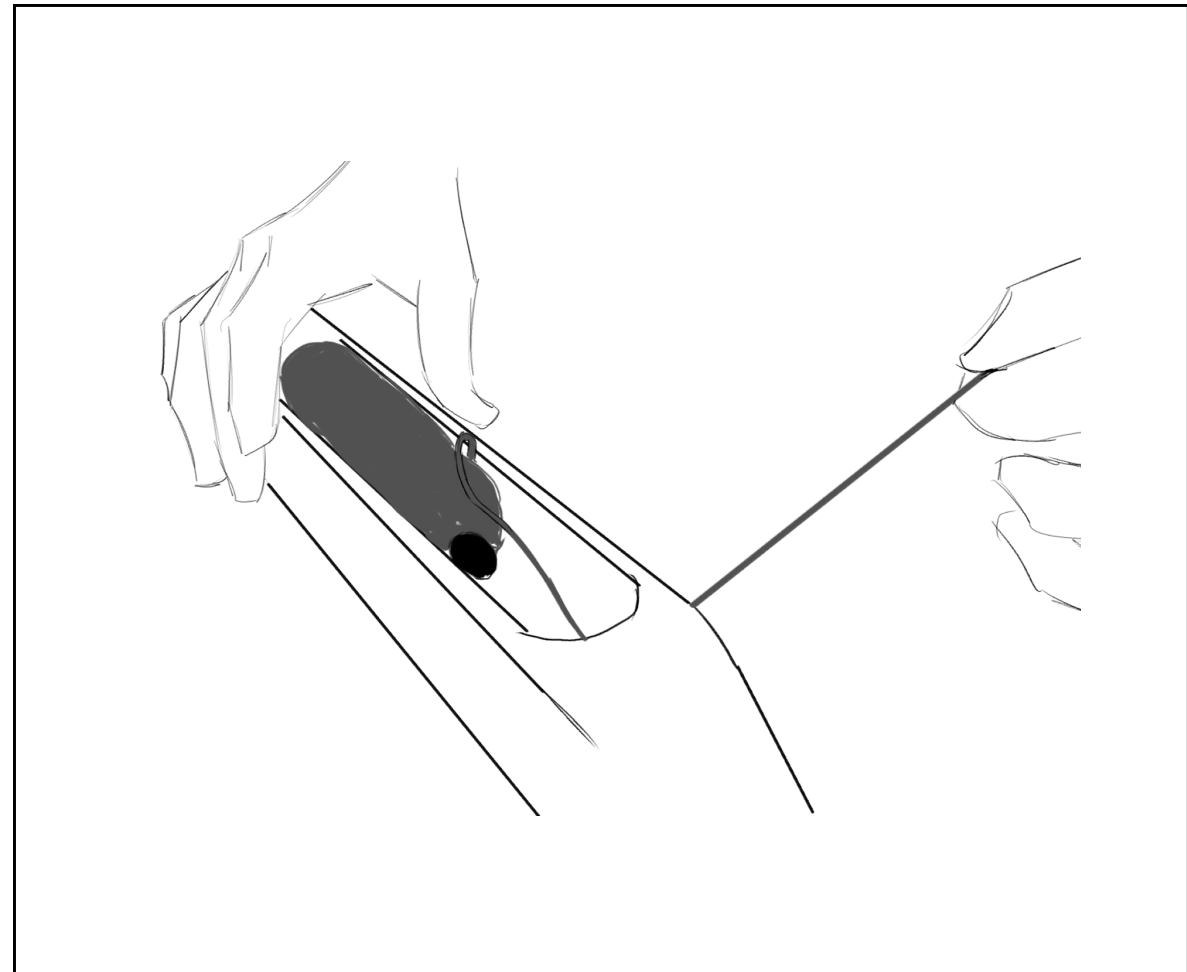
19.

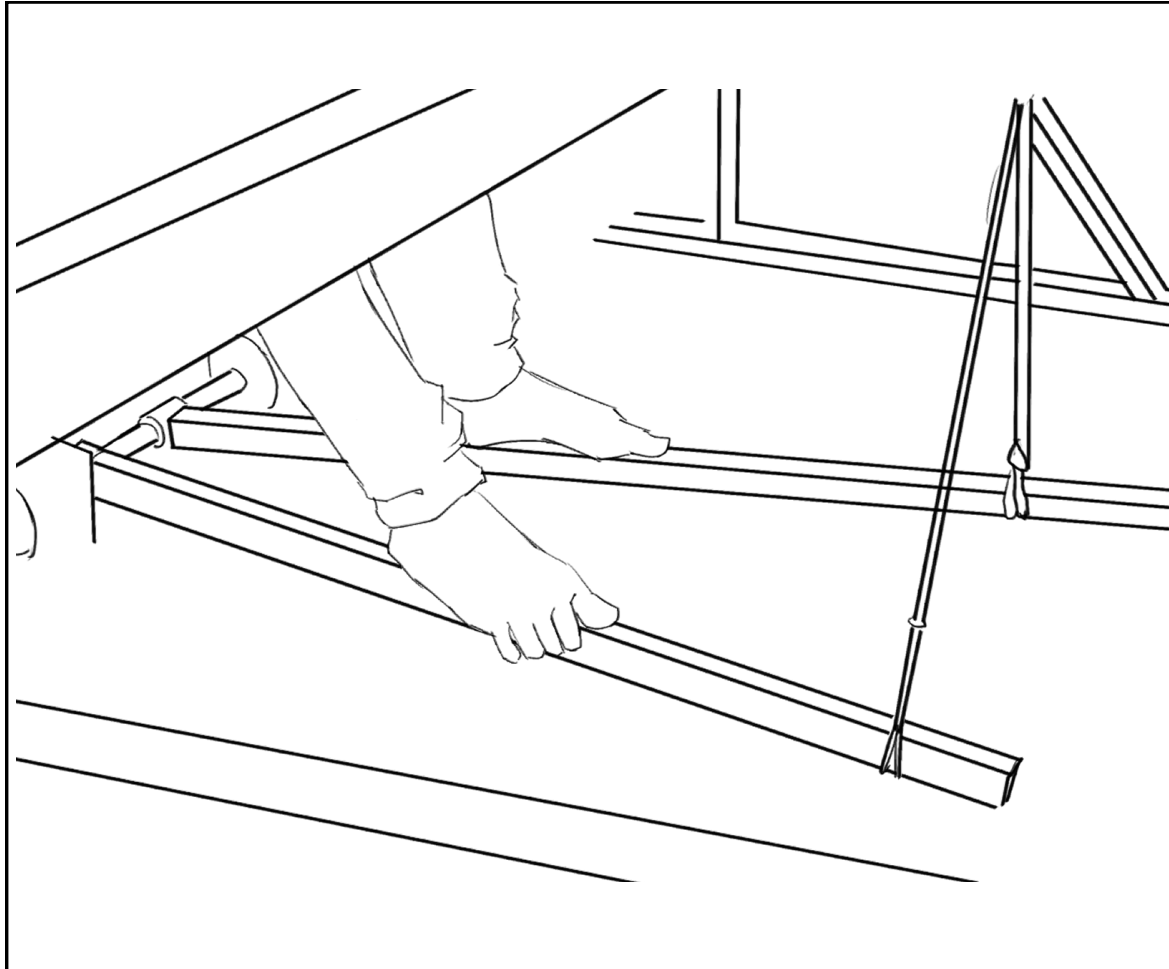
And then, the threads are finally fastened to the Cloth beam, which is located in the lower part of the handloom, opposite the Warp beam.



20.

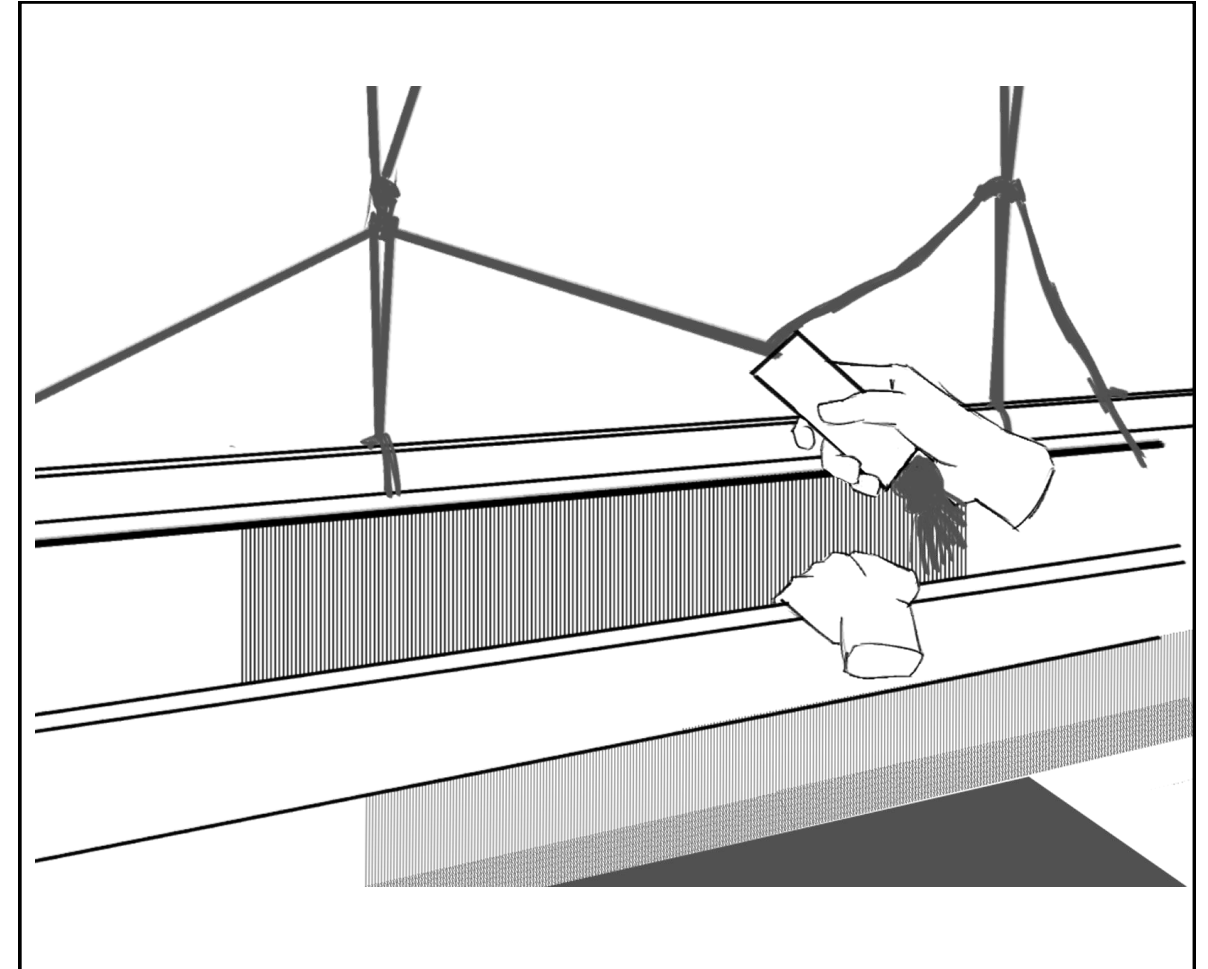
The loaded Pirn Bobbin is then fixed into the Shuttle so that Wefting can be done.





21.

Once the weaver finishes the drawing in and denting, the next process they have to do is to tie the Healds with the Treadles.



22.

The warp is finally on the handloom and the Wefting process starts. In this step, there are continuous consecutive steps from moving the shuttle to and fro using the '*mutti*', to the beater setting the weft on the warp and then the treadles moving the Heald frame up and down.

This process continues till the entire *saree* is woven.

.05

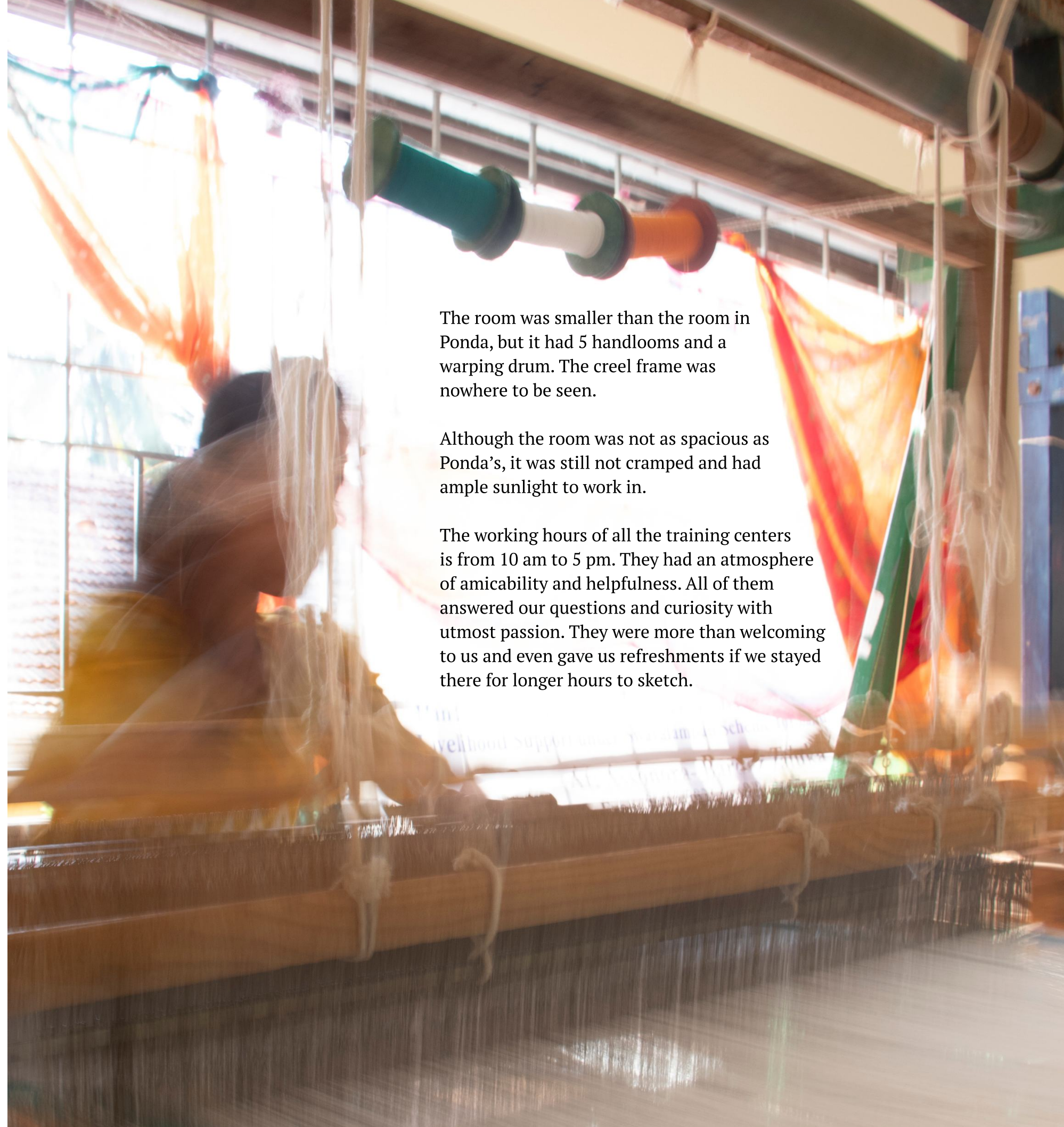
Layout of the Workshops

The training center in Ponda had 5 handlooms in total. One warping drum and stand is a must in these weaving centers. The workshop was spacious with room to walk around even with all the looms and tools. The shift and charkha were situated in the middle of the room, but, being portable, can be moved around the room if required, especially the shift.

Apart from the weaving materials, there were also many sewing machines there, which made us wonder if they conducted tailoring courses too in this facility.

The training center in Assonora was located inside the Village Panchayat. It was in shop No. 21.

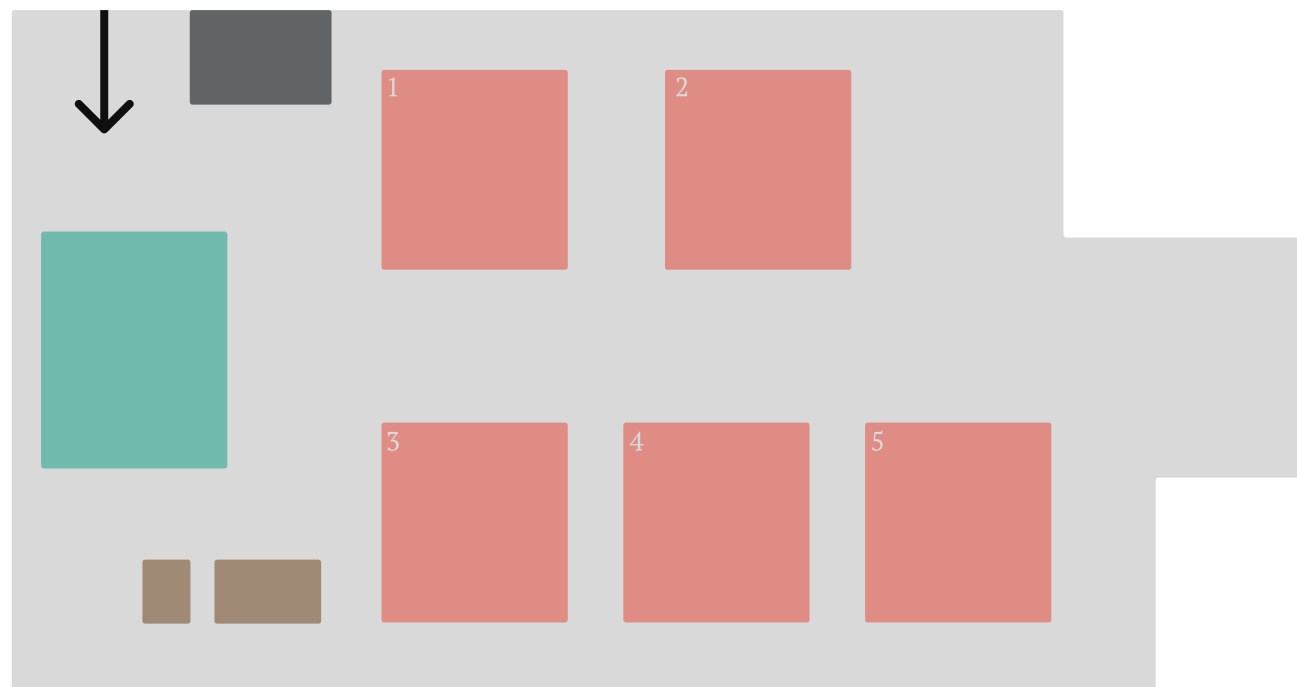
Dhentulli | MRID 2024



The room was smaller than the room in Ponda, but it had 5 handlooms and a warping drum. The creel frame was nowhere to be seen.

Although the room was not as spacious as Ponda's, it was still not cramped and had ample sunlight to work in.

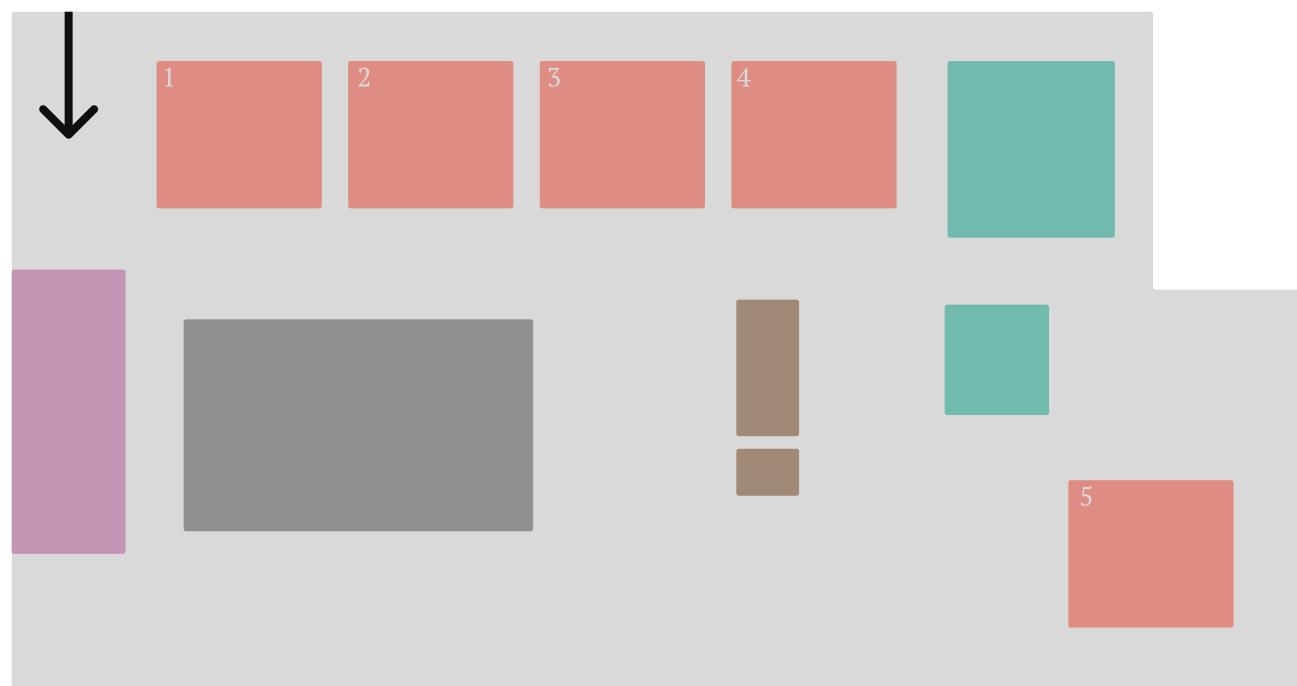
The working hours of all the training centers is from 10 am to 5 pm. They had an atmosphere of amicability and helpfulness. All of them answered our questions and curiosity with utmost passion. They were more than welcoming to us and even gave us refreshments if we stayed there for longer hours to sketch.



Layout of Assonora Center

Key

- Handlooms
- For warping- Drum and Creel frame
- For spinning- Shift and Charkha
- Wardrobe



Layout of Ponda Center

Key

- Handlooms
- For warping- Drum and Creel frame
- For spinning- Shift and Charkha
- Tailoring machines
- Stage

.06/1

Ms. Rajeshwari

Age:

25 years
(30th March, 1999)

Residence:

Caraim, Goa

Education:

Graduate from a Goan
Textile College.

Handloom Centre:

Assanora Handloom
Centre.

In conversation with her :

This passionate, talented, and ambitious individual is a weaver at the Assanora Handloom Centre. When asked about her journey, she explained how it all began at the (government-led) *Mahilamandal*. There, she teaches tailoring, embroidery, and handmade crafts to women while also pursuing a Bachelor's degree at a Goan Textile College (name unknown). It was also at the *Mahilamandal* that she learned to weave on a handloom. Dedicating her free time to mastering the craft, she was eventually recommended to the government-led *Kunbi* Handloom centers. After completing a training program to become a certified handloom weaver, she joined the Assanora Handloom Weaving Centre.

At the time of writing, she not only works in the Assanora centre, but also actively teaches other women who want to learn the art of weaving.



.06/2

Mrs. Shilpa Gaude

Age:

42 years
(12th May, 1982)

Residence:

Ponda, Goa

Education:

12th Pass.

Handloom Centre:

Ponda Handloom
Centre.

In conversation with her :

This warm and hardworking woman has been weaving for many years and currently works at the Ponda Handloom Centre for the last half of a decade. A skilled *Kunbi* weaver, she learned the craft through a government-certified six-week *Kunbi saree* weaving training program. At the center, she takes a leadership role, teaching young interns sent from Goan fashion colleges.



EMPOWERING WOMEN
EMPOWERING BHARAT
International Women's Day

Kunbi Sarees

EMPOWERING WOMEN
EMPOWERING BHARAT
International Women's Day

Government of Goa
DEPARTMENT OF HANDICRAFTS, TEXTILE & COIR
PANAJI-GOA
HANDLOOM PROCESS



Warp Yarn & Weft Yarn



Bobbin & Pirn Winding
for Warp & Weft



Putting Bobbins
on Krill Stand



Taking Yarn on
Warping Machine



Government of Goa
DEPARTMENT OF HANDICRAFTS, TEXTILE AND COIR
SWAYAMPURNA GOA AND ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT-INITIATIVES



Programs for revival of traditional Kunbi weaving conducted to about 250 Handloom weavers at 12 locations to support weavings of Carpets from the wasted cloth, weaving towels, Bed sheets, Uparne and Kunbi Sarce.

15 Power loom weavers are provided handholding support to weave Shirting and Suing Cloth at Sanguem and Shiroda Powerloom training cum production centers.

With the Design Support of this department, Chari artisans have fabricated and supplied tools such as coir yarn spinning charkhas, Corridor mat frames, Pressing Devices, charkhas for coir artisans. Capacity building of these local chari artisans in manufacturing Handlooms, Warping machine and such other tools required for handloom weaving is under which has helped increasing the productivity of the handloom artisans.

Candidates for advance and handloom to the side Goa 10 students Learning Diploma Technology at the Handloom Familynadu, IHT

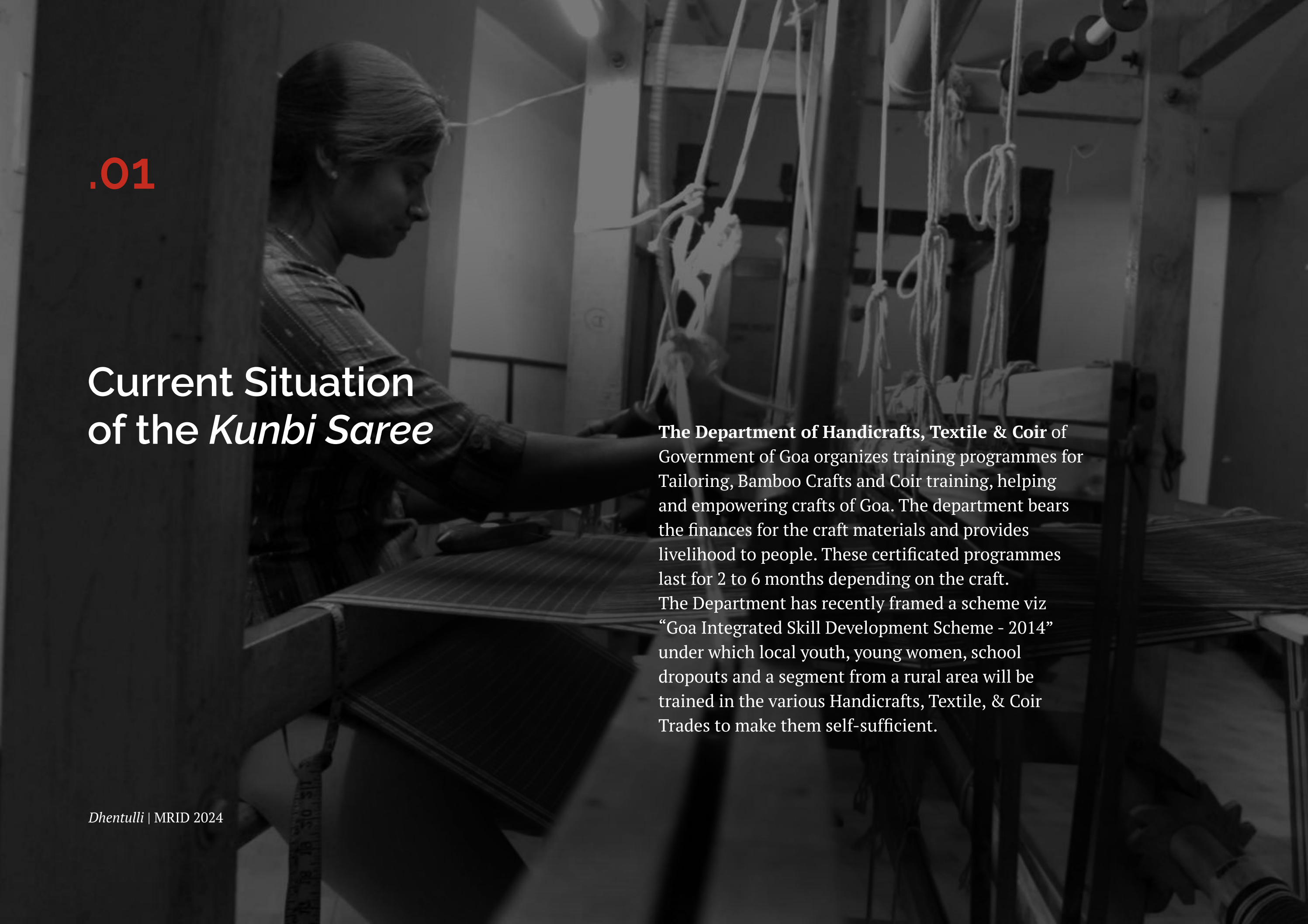
to the KPJ Bangalore for crafts. to the NCTDC Coir Board, in the Coir work.

06.

The Market

Left:

Identity of Goa and it's culture. The Kunbi Saree, is the perfect example of functionality and simplicity, just like the tribe associated with it, i.e. the Kunbi- Gawda.

A black and white photograph of a woman working on a traditional handloom. She is positioned on the left side of the frame, facing right, and is focused on her work. The loom is a large, complex wooden structure with many vertical threads and horizontal beams. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the workshop environment. The overall tone is professional and documentary.

.01

Current Situation of the *Kunbi Saree*

The Department of Handicrafts, Textile & Coir of Government of Goa organizes training programmes for Tailoring, Bamboo Crafts and Coir training, helping and empowering crafts of Goa. The department bears the finances for the craft materials and provides livelihood to people. These certificated programmes last for 2 to 6 months depending on the craft.

The Department has recently framed a scheme viz “Goa Integrated Skill Development Scheme - 2014” under which local youth, young women, school dropouts and a segment from a rural area will be trained in the various Handicrafts, Textile, & Coir Trades to make them self-sufficient.



The Department of Handicrafts, Textile and Coir operates handicraft centers in Assonora and Ponda (Goa) out of the handful others. During our visit, we observed young women undergoing weaving training. These trainees were fashion design students from Goan Fashion Design colleges. They reported being sent by their colleges for a six-month internship at these handloom centers. It's our assumption, that the government promotes *Kunbi saree* weaving among younger people through these internship programs. The centers receive raw materials like hank yarn directly from the Department of Handicrafts, Coir and Textiles (State Government).

Past & Present

The notable feature of the *Kunbi Saree* is that it was made from locally found cotton and dyed by locally sourced natural dyes. As a result, it was cheap and affordable for the *Kunbi-Gawda* people who were the main demographic for this *saree*. It was made keeping their needs in mind and hence, should be affordable for them. Every aspect of the *saree* was crafted in a way that it would be easily accessible to the *Kunbi-Gawda* people, not only for casual wear but also to flaunt during special occasions. The *saree* may be simple but that's what makes it look elegant and humble and the people adorning it feel grounded. It is really commendable how someone thought about an all encompassing piece of garment that caters to a specific group's needs so perfectly.

Dhentulli | MRID 2024

The *saree* was initially priced for less than Rs. 100 when it first started production. It slowly upped to the range of Rs. 150-250. But even then, it was not as unaffordable as it is now.

Since the raw materials have become hard to find in Goa, they need to be sourced from outside the state, which directly impacts the cost of the *saree*. Not to mention, this affects the dyeing process too, as there are no natural resources available anymore.



Top:
Kunbi saree orders for the upcoming Shigmo Festivals.

Synthetic alternatives are being used to dye the *saree*. The same *saree* costs at least Rs. 2000, if not more, in today's era. The training centers also make the course takers weave towels, shawls, dhotis in the *Kunbi* weave with a thicker thread, as practice before weaving the *Kunbi Saree* made of fine threads which requires extreme precision. These clothing items are then also sold in the exhibitions at the state level of Goa.



Top:
Dhoti weaved for an order for the upcoming Shigmo Festivals.

The people do not know the difference between the *sarees* made from a power loom and the ones made from a handloom. They prefer the power loom *sarees* as they are cheaper, which is why the hard work of the few weavers of the present version of the *Kunbi saree* is not properly rewarded.

The revival of the *Kunbi Saree* is an initiative that still needs a lot of work to make it as close to the authentic *dhentulli* as possible; which includes the cost. The weavers require an exceptional amount of training and skill to perfect the craft of weaving the finely threaded *saree*. There is little incentive to reward all this time and effort.



Lower Left:

Shawl woven in the Kunbi Weave

Bottom:

Towel woven in the Kunbi Weave



- A powerful cultural identity of the <i>Kunbi-Gawda</i> tribe - Made with cotton completely, extremely comfortable - Traditional plain weave, easy to weave - Highly Durable			- Considered a sign of backwardness - Decline of <i>Kunbi saree</i> weavers - Decline in the production and availability of BT Cotton
Strengths	SWOT Analysis		Weaknesses
Opportunities			Threats
- Participation in NAC centre for upliftment of Dhentulli - Acquiring the GI tag to promote conservation efforts - Cultural initiatives to instill intrest in <i>Kunbi saree</i> - Programmes to seed appreciation in youth for <i>Dhentulli</i> - Initiatives to bring the craft in the house of people Dhentulli MRID 2024			- Availability of cheaper, mass-produced goods. - Disintrest of <i>Kunbi saree</i> amoungst younger generation of the <i>Kunbi-Gawda</i> tribe. - Declining production of BT Cotton, leading to decline in creation of actual <i>Kunbi saree</i>.

.04

Future of the *Kunbi Saree*

While many *Kunbi* women have abandoned the *saree* in favor of more modern clothing, a surprising number hold onto these garments in trunks and suitcases. This attachment stems from a complex interplay of tradition and identity.

Firstly, the *saree* remains a potent symbol of cultural identity. Disposing of it feels akin to discarding a vital part of oneself. This sense of heritage compels women to preserve the *sarees* even if they no longer wear them themselves. Secondly, practicality plays a role. The *saree* serves as a valuable resource within the community. Women lend them to others for traditional *Kunbi* dances, ensuring the cultural significance of the garment endures. Additionally, they might intend to pass these *sarees* down as heirlooms to their grandchildren or school children, fostering a connection to their heritage.

However, the *saree's* association with tribal origins can lead to discrimination in modern society. This fear discourages women from wearing them regularly.



Top:

Goan based Fashion Designer, Wendell Rodricks, fashion store showcasing his designs that were inspired from the *Kunbi saree* was extremely popular.

Despite these challenges, there are ways to revitalize the *Kunbi saree*:

- **Bringing the Craft Home:** Instead of bulky handlooms, developing user-friendly, lightweight weaving devices would allow *Kunbi-Gawda* people to weave in their homes. This fosters a sense of cultural ownership while reviving the craft. The Corporate Social Responsibilities Act can help with the funding of materials.
- **Raising Awareness:** Participation in national arts and crafts exhibitions can introduce the *Kunbi saree* to a wider audience.
- **Social Media Advocacy:** Strategic use of social media, leveraging popular storytelling formats, can build empathy for the *Kunbi saree* and the rich history of the *Kunbi-Gawda* tribe. This can spark renewed appreciation for the textile.
- **Expanding the Saree's Reach:** Utilizing the weave and patterns of the *Kunbi saree* to create non-traditional items like carry bags, curtains, or pencil pouches can entice a broader range of consumers who might not be interested in a full *saree*.
- **Explore the drapes saree:** Using the *Saree* to explore different drapes to increase the appeal of the *saree* as the purpose will not be the same as it was before.

By implementing these strategies, we can bridge the gap between tradition and modernity, ensuring the continued legacy of the *Kunbi saree*.

Removing the stigma around the *saree* and its culture will be the key point in broadening its reach, and getting more people to wear it.

Bottom images:

Visualizing the saree in a way that is different from what it stands for can be a way of attempting to bring interest amongst the public.

*Online retailer **6yardsplus.com** showcases the *Kunbi saree* in unique styles, offering a fresh perspective on this traditional garment.*



Conclusion

The *Dhentulli* had presented a fascinating, yet complex story. While the tribe (*Kunbi-Gawda*) itself thrives economically, the *saree* has receded from daily wear, becoming primarily associated with cultural performances. This disconnect between the *saree*'s current, and its intended use highlights the influence of generations of societal and colonial pressures.

While the *Dhentulli*, a more practical variation of the traditional *saree*, was created for everyday wear, specific to the labor of the tribe, i.e. farming, it hasn't found favor in the present generation *Kunbi-Gawda*. This suggests a shift in cultural values and a move towards more contemporary clothing choices within the community.

Despite a lack of historical documentation, the *Kunbi saree*'s inherent simplicity remains its key strength. The distinct checkered weave and absence of embellishments stand in contrast to more elaborate *saree* styles across the nation. This simplicity reflects the *Kunbi* tribe's connection to nature, a

sentiment embodied in its design.

While there exists a small yet dedicated generation actively preserving the *Kunbi saree* and its tradition, the wider community's acceptance remains limited. The revival efforts headed by the state government, including design student internships with weavers, offer a glimmer of hope. However, the lack of a GI-tag and the shift towards synthetic materials pose challenges.

Will the cultural significance of the *saree* somehow be woven into the fabric of the modern textile industry? Or will it continue being washed away from the shores of Goa till it's lost forever ...

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[pg. 42] Pranjal (2024) [Photographs measuring the height of reed on the drum]. Ponda, Goa.

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